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ANNA MARCELLA'S
BOOK OF VERSES



ANNA MARCELLA ROBBINS

ANNA MARCELLA'S BOOK OF VERSES

BY
CYRENUS COLE
HER FRIEND



*It fell upon a little western flower,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.*

—SHAKESPEARE

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Apologia

This little volume is the outgrowth of some verses written at Colfax, Iowa, May 4, 1911, entitled "With Some Violets" — the first rhymes attempted by the writer since he was a sophomore in college. He thought of printing the lines on a presentation card. Then the idea enlarged itself into a desire to write five little poems for the little girl's fifth birthday, August 11, 1911. But the birthday came with the pieces unwritten. Then he began work on them, intending them for her Christmas present that year. When Christmas came the idea had grown still larger, and the result is this volume, for her sixth birthday. When time came to print them, it was found necessary to sort them out and to classify them, for many of the pieces had transgressed the six year limit. So the seven divisions were made.

In the first division the writer has placed the purely personal tributes.

In the second division he has placed the pieces relating to the sayings and fancies of children, most of the suggestions taken from the little girl to whom the book is written. Many of them were written to accompany illustrations which the author had in mind, but which it was found impossible to get executed, as he desired them. Some of the pieces are so slight that they are hampered for want of the pictures, but they are, nevertheless, included.

In the third and fourth divisions he placed the pieces about flowers, since flowers are very dear to her for whom they were written; and some sonnets which he made merely because sonnets have always been gifts of this kind.

In the fifth division are the allegorical pieces, which were written with the rest. There is the imaginary conversation between a girl and a crow, with some speculations on life and its regrets. The peacock and the nightingale teach humility and service as contrasted with vanity and idleness. The dream of the little astronomer portrays the idea and the journey of a starbeam which traveled a hundred years to see a little girl, and found nothing more beautiful in all the universe than a child. The scene in the flower garden grew out of the fancy that flowers love little girls as well as little girls love flowers. The journey through the thick woods is intended to represent the little troubles and the problems that come to children as they grow older, with the joy of triumph when the sun is reached again.

In the sixth division were placed the pieces that were written, with the rest, that seemed better fitted for the little girl's future years.

The visions in the seventh division "grew up" out of some verses written about a child's fancy that in the night she could hear music in the air, music that seemed to come from the stars, which, she thought, wanted to sing to her. And so, in fancy, he took her up where she could hear the

music. The writer kept enlarging upon this idea, for the love of the thing, until it became a larger astronomical dream, with fringes of theology and sociology.

These explanations and expositions are not deemed important enough to be made part of the volume itself, but to fill a "slip-in" explanation of why a somewhat busy writer of prose, mostly devoted to politics and business, should attempt such a flight of fancy.

The Dedication

*I know not what it is, nor why it seems,
But you of all are most of all to me,
The fairy maiden seen in all my dreams;
Like one I always knew, and longed to see.*

*Some song that I have heard, some flower's hue,
The morning, and the sweetness of the night —
All these are mingled in my thoughts of you;
In you I hear the song, and see the light.*

*And so you came in meters and in rhymes,
And so I bound you in this little book,
A lover's service like in olden times,
When beauty had no glass but purling brook.*

*And one regret abides, my service seems
So poor, compared with what I think of you;
I could not find the words to match my dreams,
But take my gift, the best that I could do.*

PART I

The Poem Called You

The Poem

*A poem is some fine excess,
So has a poet said;
And it must be, if a success,
As in remembrance told.*

*Some fantasy, a thing apart,
Still natural as suns
That sink to rest, as days depart
In all their imag'ry.*

*If Keats, a seer, has spoken true,
And which, I think, he has,
A poem then, I see in you,
And what I see I write.*

*To me some fine excess are you,
Excess of life and joy;
Excessive more in all you do,
In rapture of your soul.*

So You Are Six Today

So you are six years old today?
I cannot think how it can be;
It seems I saw you yesterday,
A bundle in a nurse's arms.

Six years have passed, and you are six?
They err who say sixteen is sweet;
Leave off the "teen" and make it six—
I wonder what ten years can add.

I grieve to see you grow so fast;
And yet, I think, I like it too;
Still oft I wish that six might last,
That you could stay a little girl.

If I might never older grow,
And you would be forever six,
Then this were heaven, what I know;
No other heaven half so fair.

I wish there were some fairy sky,
Some never, never nowhere land,
Where we could be, just you and I,
Forever happy as we are;

Some land where all the flowers grew;
Of clearing skies, or coming clouds,
At my command—and just for you,
To suit your fancy, or your needs;

With singing birds in skies of blue,
And lowing herds in fields of green;
With beds of violets for you,
And fields of golden corn for me;

Enough to wear, enough for food,
With time for play, and time for love;
Where dreams come true, and all is good,
And you the best of all the dreams!

Alas, I know it cannot be,
For you will grow in years and height,
Until some lady grand I see,
Before my eyes, in fading light.

But in those years to come, we'll meet!
You'll come, when I no more can go;
And you will cheer my halting feet,
As I have cheered your toddling steps.

And we will talk of days gone by,
Of songs we heard and sights we saw,
Of lion's tooth and tiger's eye,—
Your little hand still pressed in mine.

And you will show your pretty shoe,
And dance your polka steps for me,
And court'sy as you used to do —
When I am old, and you are grand.

Some little one that laughs and speaks
Will be your doll, for me to hold,—
I see your roses in her cheeks,
I see your twinkle in her eyes!

And so, while you will grow, as meet,
There always will be little girls;
The patter of their restless feet,
It will be heard forever more.

Your winsome eyes will brighter grow,
And mine, alas, will dimmer be;
But you will see, and I will know
The little girls forever six.

Of Something Done for You

Just when my world was growing old,
And when, it seemed, all things had been
Re-done, re-seen, and oft re-told,
You smiled, and made it new again.

You led me back to pleasant ways,
To where all life is still at spring;
And then, unending summer days,
With love as queen, and joy as king.

The speech of flowers and of birds
Came back to me in fresh delight;
The growing grass, the lowing herds,
The earth itself, renewed in might.

The ills and worries all withdrew,
While growing cares, on weary wing,
Flew out, and left a kinder view
On earth and sky and ev'ry thing.

For all of this there is no meed,
It seems, that I can render you;
But still I feel the constant need
And joy of something done for you.

Be Thou That One

Noguchi does declare
A poem, like a prayer,
Must be a lonely sigh,
And not some public cry.

No idle ear should hear,
What to one's self is dear ;
No careless lips repeat,
What to one's self is sweet.

Where poets weave the air
Into their garlands fair,
Oh, there is sacred ground ;
Let no one stand around.

The lines should be but few,
One is enough, or two ;
Whatever more we write
But dimmer makes the light.

That may be Japanese,
Which means it's over-seas ;
Six stanzas will not do
To tell the sixth of you.

Nor more than he, I care
If only one should share
With me the prayers I say,
Be thou that one, I pray.

Of All, You Are My Choice

Old Horace sang of Lydia,
Of Glycera and Chlo' ;
And Dante to his Beatrice
Made all his numbers flow.

Petrarch had Laura for his theme,
And Laura's matchless eyes ;
While Burns, with bonnie lassies, O,
To Mary gave his sighs.

The mighty lines of Shakespeare bear
A woman strange and dark ;
While Helen, she of Troy, to Poe
Was some Nicéan bark.

So poets old and poets new
Some face to love have gleaned ,
From humble cot, or palace fair ;
One out of heaven leaned.

Their glory fills our distant time,
But you are more than they ;
The glow is young upon your brow,
While they are mouldered clay.

Six years are more than centuries ;
The laughter of your voice
Is sweeter than immortal lines ;
Of all, you are my choice.

Little Miss Charity

O little friend, where are you gone,
Swift to think, and sweet to do ?
By what fancy, or what mercy drawn,
Helping them is blessing you.

O little friend, where are you flown,
To what sorrow-stricken nest ?
Where'er you are, there good is known,
Bringing thoughts of peace and rest.

A word may grow a violet
In some damp and dreary place ;
A smile may still a rose beget,
In some faint and faded face.

With charity your feet are shod ;
They go where they may serve,
Or cheer the heart, or lift the rod ;
All blessings you deserve.

The best of life is being good,
O little friend of mine ;
The whole of life is doing good,
O little friend of mine.

Your Years and Mine

You count your years in gladness,
With sorrow I count mine;
Yours bring to you no sadness,
How different with mine!

Your years they still are climbing
The hill they call Before,
While mine are fast declining
To what is Nevermore.

You're six — you will be seven!
I never count ahead;
Your birthdays are from heaven,
I like the less is said.

Impatient you are waiting
For, oh, another year,
While I go on debating
Between the hope and fear.

I think when you are twenty,
And I am many more,
That you will say, it's plenty,
While I may care no more.

¶ Little Bird

O little bird in red,
O little bird in blue,
Whatever colored bird you be,
You are the sweetest little bird
That any one will ever see.

O little bird in gray,
O little bird in brown,
Whatever lilting song you sing,
Whatever pretty speech you lisp,
You are the nicest little thing !

O little bird in pink,
O little bird in white,
Wherever in the world you be,
Whatever in the world you do,
You are the bird I like to see !

On Learning French

So you are learning French, ma chère !

Oh, then, I know that you will find
New worlds of wisdom and of cheer ;
New ways of seeming sweet and kind.

If at the pleasant task you keep,
You'll find the vast immortal mine,
Where gold and rubies thick and deep
Embedded lie, enriched by time.

I know, for once I found the door,
And knocked, and it was opened me ;
I caught a glimpse of all the store,
I saw so much, I could not see.

I saw the arts, and poesy ;
The crafts, the science of the wise ;
The worlds of love and melody,
And all that men the most can prize.

Now, all I saw is blurred by time ;
But you are young, and you have grace ;
You'll revel in the things sublime,
In ancient pompadour and lace.

'Till s'il vous plait and parlez vous,
And Gallic phrases, trite or rare,
I vow, will seem like parts of you,
Like you, oh, sweet beyond compare.

A Villanelle for You

A dainty little maid are you,
And so I pray, and so I dream,
O pretty be the things you do !

The fields abloom, the skies of blue,
Alike with love for you they teem,
A dainty little maid are you.

Where'er you walk, your favors strew,
For so the world will fairer seem,
O pretty be the things you do !

I send you roses mixed with rue,
For love, remembrance, and esteem,
A dainty little maid are you.

Be ever good, and ever true,
And find the happiness supreme,
O pretty be the things you do !

Alas, that I must say adieu,
So few my lines, so big my theme,
A dainty little maid are you,
O pretty be the things you do !

PART II

A Little Scrap Bag

Just Like a Book

*I put this in,
To fill a page;
No other use
That I can see!*

*I skip the rhyme
To prove to you
That verses blank
Look just as well.*

*I've fixed it up
Just like a book,
Although I know
No book it is.*

*It's nonsense all,
But what of that?
It's nonsense, too,
All seriousness.*

*Oh, let's forget
That we are wise;
Nor think the world
All rests on us!*

*Oh, let it slip,
And let it glide;
And let us feel
That we are free!*

The Maltese Cat and Boston Dog

Our sister Dody fell asleep,
A-sitting in her easy chair;
The more she rocked, the more she slept,
The more she slept, the more she rocked.

Outside the sun was shining bright,
And all the birds were singing loud,
The while our little Dody slept,
A-sitting in her easy chair.

The Maltese cat played on the rug,
The Boston dog stood looking on,
While little Dody slept and rocked,
A-sitting in her easy chair.

The Maltese cat was very gay,
She bit her tail and pulled her ear;
The Boston dog, with eager eyes,
Drew just a little closer by.

The cat she snarled, the dog he barked,
The Maltese cat, the Boston dog;
But still our little Dody slept,
A-sitting in her easy chair.

Soon Dody from her dreams awoke,
To hear the snarl, to hear the bark,
It was the Maltese cat that snarled,
It was the Boston dog that barked.

But no one knows if Maltese cat,
Or Boston dog upset the chair,
In which our little Dody slept,
And sent it whirling in the air.

And round and round the whirling chair,
And round and round our Dody dear,
The Maltese cat, the Boston dog
A-snarling and a-barking ran.

Her head was bumped, her doll was cracked;
But Maltese cat and Boston dog
They did not care for little things,
Like Dody and her easy chair.

The Maltese cat ran up a tree,
The Boston dog, he madly barked;
But little Dody sleeps no more,
A-sitting in her easy chair.

The Monkey and the Parrot

The cow got on a spree,
The horse danced on a rail,
The dog climbed up a tree,
The cat stood on her tail.

The robin sang, oh, oh,
The bluebird said, oh my,
The oriole, ho, ho —
All this beneath the sky.

The squirrel rushed right out,
The rabbit ran to see
What it was all about,
The giggling and the glee.

The parrot took a walk,
The monkey by her side —
'Twas this that made the talk,
The laughing far and wide.

The parrot wore her green,
The monkey wore his specs ;
It was a funny scene,
All said, it nothing lacks.

The parrot had a hat,
The monkey had a cane ;
What do you think of that ?
They must have been insane.

Doing a Lesson

Two times two is four,
And two times four is eight —
My tummy hurts me so,
I wonder what I ate?

Two times three is six,
And what makes twenty-four?
If Dody were all good,
I could not love her more.

I'm sure I do not hate
These awful sums to do,
But think that they could wait
'Til I had time to play.

Two times what is what?
Oh, how I work and fret,
Until my weary head
With figures is upset.

I think if I could have
My selfest little way,
Each figure I would make
Into some fairy gay.

Oh, Mr. Taft, and Mr. Wilson, Too

My papa, he talks politics;
I wonder what it is?
It seems like catching, and it sticks,
They talk it all the time.

He sits and talks, and stands and talks,
And always, politics;
If he is lying down, or walks,
It's always just the same.

The country isn't safe, I hear,
'Most ev'rything is wrong;
So solemnly they speak of fear,
I laugh when I should cry.

I guess that ev'rything is right,
For mama still buys hats;
She acts as if she had no fright—
I guess my mama knows.

Oh, Mr. Taft, why don't you quit?
And Mr. Wilson, too?
It is not right, it is not fit
To worry papa so.

I do not know just who you are,
Nor what your business is;
But please to take the first next car,
And go some other where.

How a Boy Played with a Doll

I watched a boy play with a doll;
It was an awkward thing to see;
But still he thought he knew it all,
Which made it queerer still to me.

He let it fall, that broke its neck,
And then he pulled the insides out,
By which he thought to mend the wreck —
He knew what it was all about!

He tried to put the outside in,
“Oh, my, it doesn’t fit,” he said;
The head he fastened with a pin,
Then pulled a stocking on the head.

He made me laugh until I cried;
The more I laughed the madder he,
The more he failed the more he tried —
At last he cried, “Oh, do help me.”

I showed him what he didn’t know;
What little dress a doll should wear,
And all those fluffy things that go
To make a doll, from shoes to hair.

Too Much of Me

The other day the Simpson girl,
She came and played with me;
The Simpson girl is big and tall,
She looks quite down on me.

Her legs are large and very long,
And stick right out her clothes;
She picks me up, just like a doll,
And it's a lot she knows!

But papa scolded me today;
He said we romped too much;
"That Simpson girl," I heard him say,
"There is too much of her."

I think I'll stay a little girl,
Not grow a tiny wee,
For fear some day papa will say,
There is too much of me.

To See the Stork

At grandma's ev'rything is big,
And there is endless room to play;
We run and romp, and roll and ride,
And, oh, how short seems ev'ry day!

The flowers there grow thick as leaves;
I love them all, and they love me,
Of ev'ry hue and ev'ry kind,
They must, for they are sweet to me.

And birds, oh, there are many birds;
All day they sing and chatter so;
At night we hear the whippoorwills,
And owls that cry when dark winds blow.

The birds I like are all the birds,
But grandma says she likes the stork;
And when I ask her why, she smiles —
I hope some day to see a stork!

When He Scolds

When papa scolds, he looks quite stern,
That is, as if he tried to be,
But wasn't really stern at all —
Just to intimidate poor me.

And when he fiercely says to me,
“An-nuh!” enough to make me jump,
I stick my finger in my mouth,
And, just a-sort-a stand and hump.

I twist my legs and pinch my toes,
And chew my apron strings and pout,
And look as though I'd cry aloud,
And wondered what it's all about.

And then I get my little chair,
And get my very little book,
And huddle up and cuddle up,
And look as sweet as I can look.

Then soon I see him smile again;
He just forgets that he was sore;
Of course — then I forget it, too,
And I just love him all the more.

The Little Confesser

I know I've been a naughty girl,
As naughty, naughty as could be;
I feel as bad as bad can feel,
And more you cannot punish me.

There's mud upon my new white shoes;
My hat is crushed, my dress is torn;
My stockings both are soiled and down,
I am a little girl forlorn.

I spattered mud on little boys,
I jumped a fence, I climbed a tree;
Oh, mama dear, I feel as if
There is a yellow streak in me!

I know I said most hateful things,
I lost my temper and I cried;
And you so nice and very good,
To do what's right I should have tried.

The things that make me feel the worst
Are things with which I worry you;
It's not the hurt that you can give,
But, oh, the hurt I've given you!

I see you cry, and yet you smile,
And kiss your naughty little girl!
Oh, it's because you love me so,
That I will be a better girl.

Giving

I had three dollies yesterday,
I haven't any now;
The one it fell and broke its head,
Which made an awful row.

And one I took to Mary Ann,
For dollies she had none;
Her folks are poor, and so I did
Just what I should have done.

And one I gave to Mary Jane,
Who's lying sick in bed;
Jane kissed the doll and kissed my hand,
Her eyes with tears were red.

But when you give your things away,
Somehow, they all come back;
Some fairy brings them while you sleep,
Sometimes, you get more back!

How She Entertained a Caller

My mama is not in,
She's playing bridge, I fear;
But I am serving tea
To all my dollies dear,
And will be pleased to have you tarry here.

I think I'm big enough
To have you call on me,
To visit with my friends,
And drink a cup of tea;
Please take this chair, and all our feast you'll see.

Pray, do not mind the room,
It's dreadf'ly littered up;
It's hardly possible
To find a cleanly cup,
But still you must not leave before we sup.

This doll is hobbled tight;
This has a harem skirt—
Too bad it is, I know,
But they would feel quite hurt
If they were out of style, and could not flirt.

These heels are much too high,
And see this dreadful hair,
It's vulgar and it's vain,
It makes one quite despair,
But dollies must the fashions keep with care.

But, honestly, I wish
That women dared to be
Just what they are, and not
Mere painted imag'ry
Of something crazy they would like to be.

If they could only see
Themselves as others do!
Like dolls, they're fair without;
Within, oh, what ado,
Sawdust and rags and things that are not true.

I've seen quite much of life,
And think it's better far—
And yet I may not know—
To be just what you are,
If just a candle, don't pretend a star.

And, anyway, there's folks
That like a candle more
Than they can like a star;
Some like you fat, some, poor,
So why pretend, or this or that adore?

I'm very glad you came,
And glad you tarried, too,
And drank a cup of tea;
My mama will be blue
To learn that playing bridge meant missing you.

Feathers and Furs

To wear a feather in my hat,
Some little bird must die;
To wear a muff upon my hands,
Some fox must say good bye.

My mama doesn't mind the price,
But how about the fox?
And how can little birdies sing,
Their feathers in a box?

They never said a word to me,
They never did me wrong;
The fox he may be fond of life,
The bird must love his song.

I think I'd rather wear my hat
Without a pretty feather;
I think I'd rather have bare hands
In cold and clammy weather.

The Boy and Dog

I wish I were a boy,
And had a dog;
I want no other toy,
But just a dog.

I'm tired of my toys,
Of dresses, too;
I envy little boys
Who play with dogs.

A boy knows how to play
To please a dog;
He has a silly way
Girls cannot learn.

I think they're much alike,
A boy and dog;
And that is why they like
Each other so.

A boy can run and prowl
Just like a dog;
A dog can romp and growl
Just like a boy.

It is no re'lly joy
To be a girl;
I'd rather be a boy,
Or else, his dog.

If You Will Be My Santa Claus

If you will be my Santa Claus,
I'll be your little girl;
If you will wear a long white beard,
I'll wear a little curl.

I'm not so young I do not know
That Santa is not real;
He's just some dear good friend like you,
Whose love a girl can feel.

The wind, the snow, the cold for you,
The nice warm hearth for me,
But that's because you're Santa Claus,
To fill my home with glee.

I'd like it better if you came
With reindeer and with sled,
But still to me, it's all the same,
If aeroplane instead.

So you may be my Santa Claus
And use an aeroplane;
And I will be your little girl,
No matter what's my name.

I'd Rather Be Your Chauffeur, Dear

I'd rather be your chauffeur, dear,
Than be your Santa Claus;
I love the road, I love to steer—
But there's no time to pause!

So don your pretty bonnet, do,
And leave a curl before;
And wear your witching veil of blue,
And I will love you more.

No present for a stocking meant
For you tonight will do;
The earth, the air, the firmament,
All these I'll give to you.

The air is fresh, the sun is low,
The moon will not be late;
So we are off — oh, here we go,
There is no time to wait!

How like a moonbeam winds the road
As up and down it goes,
From setting sun to rising moon,
And all your words are "ohs!"

The hills and hollows skip along,
The trees in dizzy reels;
We shout with joy to hear the song
Sung by the whirring wheels.

The cattle dance among the trees,
The birds they scatter far;
How fast we go, there's no one sees —
They cannot see our car.

The chug-chug-chug, the whirr-whirr-whirr,
The wind upon the shield!
The road it leaps, the car it sweeps
The panoramic field!

The reindeer and the aeroplane,
The motor car for me!
The snowy course, the airy lane,
The dusty road for me!

So you may be my little girl,
Your chauffeur I will be;
I'll wear my goggles, you, your curl;
How happy now are we!

My love is boundless as the sky,
And deeper than the sea;
I cannot stop to say good-bye —
Forever ride with me!

Some Little Problems

There are a lot of funny things

Your little girl would like to know;
She ponders them, she studies them,
But cannot tell why they are so.

What holds the ladder in the sky
For moon to climb at dusk of day?
And when that silly moon is half,
Why is the other half away?

Why are the twinkling stars at night?
And where are they, when it is day?
Why don't they fall, or tired grow?
Who holds them in their dizzy way?

Who lights the sun each early morn?
Who puts it out again at night?
Who pushes it along all day,
But always keeps himself from sight?

Where are the birds in winter time?
Why don't the leaves stay on the trees
And keep their limbs from cold and snow,
Not let them stand all bare and freeze?

Why does the fire burn so hot?
And why so cold and white the snows?
Why does the water always run,
And no one knows just where it goes?

Who taught the birds to build their nests?

And who knows how the squirrel feels?

Why can't the rabbit climb a tree,

When dogs are barking on her heels?

And dogs, why can they bark and growl,

While cats can only mew and purr?

And cows, why can't they sing like birds,

And little pig, who stole his fur?

And why am I a little girl,

And have so long to wait to grow?

And why do folks grow old and gray,

And where they go, why don't they know?

I wonder too, still hardly dare—

Was God a baby once like me?

Who tucked Him in his little bed?

What mother rocked Him on her knee?

To the Brook

Whence do you come, O little brook?
And whither do you go?
I pray you, stop a bit, and look;
Why must you hurry so?

Is some one waiting anywhere?
Have you some work to do?
You make me think you do not care
For me as I for you.

How far is it to where you go,
With haste and all your might?
And do you never weary grow,
Or never sleep at night?

Each day I come to visit you,
And sing my little song;
But seems, no matter what I do,
You rush and splash along.

I love the violets that grow
Along your mossy shore;
I love the sweetened winds that blow,
Forever, evermore.

I love the birds that come to drink,
And thank you with a song,
The robin and the bobolink,
The blackbird with his throng.

A very little girl am I,
And you, a little brook;
I run to you, but you run by,
With never word, or look.

If you loved me as I love you,
And love your trees and birds,
I'm very sure that you would do
Too much to tell in words.

Good Morning, Pretty World

Good morning, pretty world,
All washed in dew;
With all your lights unfurled,
Forever new.

Your sun is up so high,
I fear I'm late;
The lights that flood your sky,
They never wait.

I had my dolls to dress,
Help Dody, too;
Of course, I might do less —
But howdy do?

Good morning, little bird,
How do you do?
It seems that you have heard
That I love you.

'T was sweet of you to sing,
A-waiting me;
Some crumbs for you I bring,
Most joyfully.

Good morning, little squir'l,
You're up your tree;
Your head must be a-whirl,
So full of glee.

Good morning, pretty rose;
You scent the dew
That fell, while you did doze —
A kiss for you!

Good morning, buds and trees,
Good morning, light;
Good morning, humming bees,
And ev'ry sight.

The world looks sweet to me,
And, happy I;
I think today will be
Without one sigh.

Once more, good morning, all
That's out of door;
Good morning, one and all,
And many more.

Good Night, O Tired World

Oh, weary feet that bring me home,
And weary eyes that sight
The creeping stars in heaven's dome —
O tired world, good night!

Each birdie finds its cosy nest,
Wherever it may be;
In your dear arms I now would rest,
Your birdie I will be.

How short the day, and now so long
The darkness and the night!
We romped and played, with shout and song —
But now, please, hold me tight!

I've wilful been, and naughty, too,
As bad as bad could be;
She did it first — and wouldn't you,
If you had been just me?

Oh, once I thought that we would drown,
For, naughty-like, we took
And laid our shoes and stockings down,
And waded in the brook!

I felt the angry waters sweep;
My feet were in a whirl —
The promise that she did not keep
Still hurts your little girl.

"Twould not be hard for me to cry,
Just thinking of my fright;
But now I'm brave, for you are nigh —
And you must hold me tight!

I wish that I could ask some star
To bid them all good night;
So many, many friends there are,
Now hidden from my sight.

Good night to all the birds and trees,
Good night to one and all;
To squirrels and to humming bees,
To things I can't recall.

Night weaves for each a slumber gown,
And sings her slumber song;
And little stars are looking down,
To guard the sleeping throng.

My head is nodding like, you say,
A lily on its stalk —
Oh, dear, it was a tired day,
I re'lly can not walk!

Oh, what a pretty bed for me,
So sweet it looks, and white!
Just drop me in, and let me be,
I feel asleep — good night!

A Little Epilogue

Just ninety and nine
Are the rhymes I made;
The rhymes that were mine,
But I gave to you.

And this is the sheep,
The poor little lamb,
That left Miss Bo-Peep,
And wandered alone.

So this I will keep,
For you have enough;
While I can not sleep,
For thinking of you!

O the pastures green,
And the skies of blue,
By all may be seen
Who read in this book!

But this is my own,
Nor more will I sing,
Since you are so grown,
With ninety and nine!

PART III

A Basket of Flowers

These Posies Take

*A glory for your hair,
A girdle for your waist,
A garland for your brow —
These posies take, oh, haste!*

*Your life is still a dream,
So young, and still so fair;
Tomorrow never comes,
You have no time to spare!*

*Be happy while you can,
Be joyful while you may;
All flowers bloom for you,
And love fills ev'ry day.*

*Flit like the humming bird;
And like the busy bee
Suck nectar from each bloom,
Wherever it may be.*

*I gathered these for you,
For you, and you alone;
And while I keep them all,
I give you all your own.*

*Love multiplies its gifts;
All that my love makes yours,
Your love makes doubly mine —
O sweet the dream endures!*

With Some Violets

Dear one, I wish that I might send
Some flowers half as sweet as you ;
Some flowers with your golden glow,
Some flowers with the tender blue
Of your kind eyes.

I climbed and searched the sunny hills,
And all the dewy dells I trod,
But not a flower did I find,
In all the gardens of our God,
As sweet as you.

The best that I could find are these,
These blossoms bluer than the skies,
Plucked from their mossy beds of green,
And frail as blended smiles and sighs,
And most like you.

And, pardon me, because I dare
To think they're half as nice as you ;
But if the fairy gods should make
Some flowers patterned after you,
It would be these.

Her Prayer to a Lily of the Valley

Where does the lily of the valley find
Its heaven-sweetened breath?
In dews and damps and places most unkind
It strangely grows and sweetly smiles.

And what is dark it makes as light as snow,
As snow against a maiden's breast;
And what is foul it makes as sweet as glow
On babe a mother's lips have kissed.

Within its mass of leaves it folds the scent
The art of man has never found;
Did earth give up, or was it heaven-sent,
This bridal gift, this odored kiss?

A heaven sweet from rankest earth distilled,
Where'er it grows is holy ground;
Where'er its odors rise the mind is filled
With wonder how its task was wrought.

“Teach me your secret sweet, O lily fair,
That I may make my life as pure;
That from my pain, my worry, and my care
Incense may rise to sweeten life.”

Some Jonquils For Her

More flowers from your hands?
How like the sun and rain,
That little heart of yours!
And mine the joy and gain!

A line is each sweet bud,
The whole, a poem fine;
I strive to utter still
The thoughts that you make mine.

I dare not think if God,
Who made these flowers be,
Or you, who sent them here,
The dearer is to me.

You seem to me to be
Some lyric like a hymn;
My image of my God,
My utterance of Him.

With Some Daffodils

He scattered flowers like
The stars that shine at night;
And stars He planted in
The sky, like flowers bright.

And whether violet,
Or star — 't is but a name —
The work and deed were one,
The process was the same.

The hand could shape the rose,
Could fashion, too, the star;
This that I hold, is rare
As light that shines afar.

I dare not think it chance,
But some divine command,
Though careless seems the plan,
And prodigal, the hand.

And though in places far,
On mountains and by seas,
The fairest blossoms blow,
Where no one walks, or sees,

I like the faith that holds
God made them beautiful,
To make you good and true,
And ever dutiful.

Violets From St. Valentine

A little bunch of violets,
From good St. Valentine?
More happiness than wealth begets,
The priceless joy is mine!

And you are my St. Valentine,
In coat and hood of brown?
The violets and you, both mine,
And bow ties bonnet down.

I could not tell, if bloom or curl,
The dearer, sweeter were;
They seemed like one, the gift and girl,
Her flowers part of her.

The Poet's Daffodils

While walking in a country lane,
The poet says he strangely came
Upon a field of daffodils;
He stood and gazed, and gazed again,
Beside the waves, beneath the hills,
There danced ten thousand daffodils.

He turned at last, that poet kind,
And left the daffodils behind;
But oftentimes, in thought, or sigh,
The picture painted on the mind
Flashed back upon his inward eye,
And daffodils afar seemed nigh.

I, too, have walked in wood and field,
And felt the pleasure that they yield,
When, by some happy circumstance,
A sudden patch of flowers reeled
Before my eyes in wavy dance,
Each bloom responsive to my glance.

But all the wealth of inward thought
That those ten thousand flowers brought,
Were thoughts of you, so strange and mild;
You seemed the one the flowers sought,
And all their sweet abandon wild
But mimicked you, O sweet, my child.

On Seeing a Rose Opening

Life is not made of days of toil,
The slave and ox have all of that,
And all that food and drink can get;
Nor is it made of mere turmoil.

One raptured moment far exceeds
A century of solemn thought;
It makes the joy the world has sought,
The joy that fills the higher needs.

To see the bud of spring, to know
The rhythmic joy of life that sings
Itself from out the bird that wings
Its flight through morn's enchanted glow!

The touch of love is born of eyes
That wear the matchless beauty of
The skies, now fair, now dark above,
And feel the heart dissolve in sighs!

The work of art, the song supreme,
The glow of lips, the touch of hands,
The flag we love in distant lands —
The sudden thrills that come unseen!

The sum of these is life and joy;
For life is measured not in years,
Nor yet in hopes, nor yet in fears,
But moments of enraptured joy.

On Finding a Lady Slipper

Down in a deep and dewy dell,
A pretty lady slipper grew;
And there is nothing else to tell,
For it had nothing else to do.

Above the grass its yellow bloom
Hung nodding in the balmy breeze;
A little plot was all its room,
But, oh, the gift it had to please!

Half orchid, half a lily fair,
O like some sweet excess of joy!
So fine, so exquisite, so rare,
But still to God, a wind-tossed toy.

No poet ever wrote a line,
No painter ever made a scene,
Was half so rare, so superfine,
No fairer thing the world has seen.

No sign of effort, nor of pain,
But in a night and on a morn,
O like the sun, O like the rain,
It came in matchless beauty born!

I wonder much, I ponder more,
So wholly perfect, so supreme!
Entranced I stand, and I adore,
And ask what God and nature mean.

With Wild Apple Blossoms

From France these lilies came,
From England came this rose ;
But these, unknown to fame,
Unmeasured sweets disclose.

Upon some scragged tree,
Untended and unkempt,
They grew, abundant, free,
Unheeded and undreamt.

Rose-tinted, lily-white,
And freshened by the dew,
They opened in the night,
Sweet-filled with love for you.

O apple blossoms wild
That glorify our land !
O native waif, and child
That grows without command !

No artificial bloom,
No petted, pampered sweet —
The forest for its room,
For dearest maiden meet !

So delicate, so fair,
I cannot tell if you
Are most like it, O rare !
Or it is most like you.

What the Wild Rose Said to Her

I came from starry skies,
Where lies God's Fairyland;
I came enwrapt in sighs,
By love's divine command.

The fairies' blushes glow
Upon my soul, once white
As lies unstained the snow
That fell in stillest night.

It was my heav'nly parent
Gave me a coat of thorn;
Lest beauty, so apparent,
By ev'ry hand be torn.

A fugitive from heaven,
A wanderer on earth,
To you alone is given
The secret of my birth.

To none must you impart
What I have told to you,
The secret of my heart,
And what I am, and do.

Nor why I came to you;
Nor why I taught you love,
And whispered in the dew;
Nor what I whispered of.

And as you cherish me,
So all the love is mine,
Of you a part shall be;
And by my face to shine!

I grow among the rocks,
I blossom by the road;
With eagles on their rocks,
And where the torrent flowed.

I scent the cottage door,
I shade the palace wall;
I'm comfort for the poor,
And beauty for them all.

A day, and I am gone
In evanescent flight;
My beauty heaven drawn,
I vanish with the light.

A breath of joy and love
Is all I give the world;
A glimpse of heav'n above,
Which in a night is furled.

I came from starry skies
To give the world a hint
Of beauty full of sighs,
All in a vap'rous tint.

PART IV

An Old-Time Gift

Presenting Some Sonnets

*Six years have come and gone;
Six more will quickly pass,
For brief is fairest dawn,
And twilight ends the day.*

*We laugh, and time moves by;
Then smile, and wonder why;
And then we learn to sigh
For days that are no more.*

*We glory in our strength,
And then we feel it fade;
For even unto length
Of years there comes an end.*

*'Tis morning, noon, and night,
With life as with each day;
When life is at its height
A year seems like a day.*

*These sonnets take, my dear,
Whose morning still is young;
Read them some other year —
They helped to fill your book!*

*They were, in olden time,
The poets' gifts of love,
In glorious days of rhyme,
And rose-twined womanhood.*

Morning

Sweet one, arise! The dawn is on the hill;
Her primal maiden blush o'erspreads the sky,
While birds of darkness to their forests fly;
The sky is streaked with rivulet and rill
That overflow their azure banks and spill
Their light and warmth on fruitful fields that lie
Sweet-washed in dews — 'tis morning in the sky!
How sings the world! Why do you tarry still?
The ardent sun sweet woos the earth that waits
For love; impatient stands the clam'rous day —
O hear him knock at all the bursting gates!
He bids us love while cares are still away!
Your window open, dear! Before your eyes
The dawn herself will stop in glad surprise.

Noon

I thought we were where violets did grow,
Where all the grassy hollows were abloom,
And all the air one breath of sweet perfume ;
Where clouds above were soft, and white as snow,
And trailed their garments in our noontide glow
O'er skies of endless blue ; all joy, no gloom,
For life and love the world one vaster room —
Until we heard that bell ! and now we know
Our noon was but a dream. Oh, now 'tis gone
It seems like webs that spiders weave by day
For night to hang her jewelled dews upon,
'Till wind, like bell we heard, sweeps them away.
We go, while others come, yet glad it seemed
That heaven kissed the earth, the while we
dreamed.

Afternoon

O Time, stay yet a while in heaven's noon !
We saw the day ascend the rosy bars,
And one by one snuff out the weary stars ;
How beautiful our morn that passed so soon !
When lusty manhood brought its fuller boon,
Naught daunted, we enlisted in the wars ;
Once flushed with victory, now full of scars,
We dread the passing of imperial noon.
With less to live we long the more for life,
Like Tantalus, condemned, we thirst and cry ;
How fair the speeding world, how fierce the strife
To stop the hand of time — each day one sigh !
How poor we prized what now so precious
 seems,
The days that are no more, we spent in dreams.

Night

While yet 'twas afternoon, how we did grieve,
Prayed time to stop, and cruel fate reviled;
But now the night is come, we're reconciled;
We know that as we came, so we must leave,
And as we doubted then, so now believe.
We boasted in our noon, our morn was wild,
But into night we come the trusting child,
For now we know that time gives no reprieve.
And so we sit and merely contemplate
The things that were, and are to be; the years
For all our hopes too few — alas, too late!
But while we wonder much we have no fears;
What matters it? One hope we still adore,
That evermore is more than nevermore.

A Prayer for Her

O kindly Heaven, smiling, grant
 Her noon, and afternoon, and night
May all be sweet as is her morn,
 All filled with love, and warm with light.

O kindly Heaven, smiling, grant
 Her joy, prosperity, and love;
With friends and flowers fill her days,
 And ev'ry blessing from above.

This is my prayer, is all I ask;
 Be Thine the gracious joy to give;
Withhold Thy gifts from me, if need,
 That she may have the more to live.

August 11, 1912

PART V

If They Could Talk to You

Unuttered Speech

*When Orpheus of old did play,
The trees and stones were moved;
And skeptics of that ancient day
Asked not such faith be proved.*

*If flowers speak to us, and birds,
Why should we not believe?
What matters it, they use no words?
The lack alone we grieve.*

*All life is one, all spirit, one;
In blossom, bird, and tree
The purpose of creation's done,
Whatever life may be.*

*'Tis now at last the world has learned
The sacredness of life;
The faith for which good men have yearned
Has triumphed over strife.*

*So blossom, bird, and star I bring
Unto your kindly heart;
If they are fair, or if they sing,
They mean a human part.*

*I like to think they speak to me;
I like to feel I hear
What they would say to you and me,
If we but had their ear.*

The Girl and the Crow

An old black crow sat in a tree;
Upon a log, a little girl;
He was as black as black could be;
Upon her brow, a golden curl.

She looked at him, he looked at her;
She was just six, he was a score;
But neither knew what might occur,
And so they sat and wondered more.

The crow, he looked demure and wise,
A smart old chap, so he was known;
And she had serious, pensive eyes
That looked as if she knew her own.

With one black foot he scratched his chin;
With one white hand she brushed a fly;
He winked at her, she smiled at him,
And then each wondered quickly, why.

He flew three times around his tree,
He flapped his wings and said, caw, caw;
Three times around her log ran she —
The strangest sight I ever saw.

He smoothed his feathers neatly down,
And with a wing wiped off his face;
Then sat content, without a frown,
And thought, "this is a cosy place."

Then up she pulled each pretty hose,
And coyly down she pulled her gown,
And said: "Of all, this place I chose;
I can't walk up; you can fly down."

He shook his head and blinked each eye,
To say he could not understand;
She knew his plight and, with a sigh,
She spoke like this, and waved her hand:

"It is in vain, I must confess,
For I talk girl and you talk crow;
And what you say, I can not guess;
And what I say, you cannot know.

"Oh, Mr. Crow, it is too bad!
You love my lawn, I love your woods;
It makes me very, very sad
We can not know each other's moods.

"You know some things I want to know,
And I have secrets in my heart;
But I talk girl and you talk crow,
And this it is keeps us apart."

With sorrowed eyes she looked at him;
With saddened eyes he looked at her;
She wished that she might talk to him;
He wished that he could talk to her.

If they could talk, the girl and crow,
She'd talk to him of toys and dolls;
And he would talk of wood and snow,
Of mountain-sides and waterfalls;

Of how they fly, and roost in flocks,
With watchers on the outer trees;
Of men with guns, and boys with rocks;
Of how they work, and take their ease.

But no, and oh, alas, alack!
In silence there they sat and sighed;
She knew that he was wise and black;
He knew that she had wit and pride.

“Alas,” she thought, “if I could fly,
How happy then my life would be;
To brush the clouds, to kiss the sky,
From ev’ry care and worry free.”

“If I could live as she,” he said,
“How happy then my life would be;
I have no place to lay my head,
From fear and worry never free.”

And thus, as wiser mortals do,
She envied him, he envied her;
She thought her tasks were hard to do,
His life seemed like a dream to her.

She wanted what she could not hold,
And what she held, it made her sigh ;
He thought her warm, when he was cold,
He grieved his shelter was the sky.

And still they sat, and still they stared,
The pretty girl, the handsome crow ;
The sun sank low, but neither cared,
For something more each sought to know.

So young was she, but deep her thought,
While he both north and south had been ;
The more he looked the more was wrought
The wonder in his puzzled brain.

At last she rose, and walked back home ;
He left the tree and flew away ;
She felt as if she'd like to roam,
And what he felt, I can not say.

At home she thought of distant wood,
Of tossing cloud and sweeping sky ;
And in his tree, he thought how good
'Twould seem, if he to her could fly.

The Peacock and the Nightingale

Said the Peacock to the Nightingale,
"Your song is very pretty,
But see my many-colored tail,
And then forget your ditty.

"'Tis just a little bird are you,
In reddish brown and gray;
You sing, and that is all you do,
Until the break of day.

"The gorgeous king of birds am I,
Of earth the fairest thing;
Arrayed in colors of the sky,
Why should I care to sing?"

Said the Nightingale to the Peacock vain,
"I do not envy you;
The pity is, you are not plain;
You strut, that's all you do.

"Unkind and bold you seem to me;
I think that gentleness
Has more of worth, and modesty,
And ever kindliness.

"A little bird in gray and brown,
'Tis surely true, am I;
But, oh, my song has won renown,
And made the world to sigh.

“I do not grieve my coat is brown,
My nether garments gray;
A heart is wrapped in my little gown,
I’m dressed in my roundelay.

“And at my size you cast your flings;
The elephants and whales
Are more than you, if you measure things
By what they weigh on the scales.

“One little heart with some love in it,
Is more than a ton of dross;
One little throat with a song in it,
Is more than an inch of gloss.

“I labor when the night is done,
I do what there is to do;
At night I sing the song unsung,
For love of the thing I do.

“The shades of night arouse my love;
The moon and stars are mine,
The clouds that flock the sky above,
And the dawn, the light divine.

“I sing to none but to mine own,
To my mate, and to our young;
A leafy bower is my throne,
By a nest in the branches hung.

“I sing unseen, but hundreds come
And wait to hear my song,
Enrapt they listen, wondersome,
But I never heed the throng.

“It’s better far to do one’s work,
And sing one’s little song,
Than strut around and boast and shirk,
All which, I think, is wrong.”

The Peacock folded up his tail,
Seemed hurt and stalked away,
Without good night to the Nightingale,
Who sang the night away.

The Little Astronomer's Dream

Last night, while quietly I slept,
A Moonbeam and a Starbeam came,
And brightly through the window swept,
And danced upon my snow-white bed.

The Moonbeam wore a silver hood,
The Starbeam wore a reddish cap ;
I saw the cap, I saw the hood,
The silver shone, the red, it glowed.

I was as still as still could be,
That I might hear what they might say ;
I feared if I should move a wee,
That they would leave, so shy they seemed.

“I came two hundred thousand miles,”
I thought I heard the Moonbeam say ;
“I came a million million miles,
And many more,” the Starbeam said.

“I came to see this pretty girl,”
The Moonbeam said. “And so did I ;
To kiss these eyes, to touch this curl,”
The Starbeam said ; and then she glowed.

And to my little self I thought,
If they have come so far for me,
They will not leave whom they have sought,
If I should speak, as well as they.

And so I asked, as in a dream,
“How did you dare to come so far?
How many things you must have seen,
The man in the moon, the bear in the sky.”

I clapped my hands, the while I dreamed,
And felt some strange expectancy;
The things that men had sought, it seemed
Would all be told, and told to me.

The Starbeam sought to still my fears,
As, with a distant look, she said:
“As you count time, a hundred years
It is I’ve journeyed to be here.

“I travel fast, as fast as thought,
And seven times around the world
I go while slowly you count aught;
But still it took a hundred years.

“The stars I saw were like the sight
Of many sands, each burning bright,
From depth to depth, from height to height,
Forever and forever more.”

And then she stopped; there intervened
A silence, seemed a hundred years;
I held my breath, my eyes I screened,
Until I heard a silver voice:

“Up in the moon,” the Moonbeam said,
“No man is there, nor living thing;
All desert shores; all bare, all dead,
As far as eye or mind can see.

“A wasted world, a thing that seems;
No water for your thirst; no air
To breathe; no thoughts, no hopes, no dreams;
No little girls that smile in sleep.

“No more there is to say, I’m done;
My very light is not my own,
But borrowed from the burning sun,
The sun that’s brother to the stars.”

“Not from a barren shore I come,”
The glowing Starbeam then resumed,
“But from a burning, surging sun
That roaring goes through vaulted space.

“The everlasting fires burn
White-hot upon my starry home;
Great flames, whichever way you turn,
Through million miles and million years.

“From such a seething place I came;
I left a hundred years ago,
But still I feel the burning flame,
And by its force I shine and glow.

“I passed great worlds in orbits whirled
 Too vast for even me to know;
And comets through the spaces hurled,
 And planets rolling in their spheres.

“I swept along the Milky Way,
 I saw the Bear and Pleiades,
The Sisters Seven, blithe and gay,
 And all the wonders of the skies.

“Sometimes I passed in crystal sea,
 Sometimes, in sea of amethyst,
On eager quest that I might see
 This blue reflection of your eyes.

“A hundred years to find you here;
 Nor did I count the eager miles;
And no one has, and no one e'er
 Will count the countless miles I came.”

“And did you come, oh, just for me?
 Oh, what am I that you should come,”
I cried in wonder and in glee,
 “To me so far from things so grand?”

The Starbeam seemed aglow with love,
 Her light in more effulgence shone
From heights that seemed so far above,
 And this is what I heard her say:

“In all that space I did not find
So wondrous a thing as you;
With lips and eyes, and heart and mind,
Incarnate dream of love — a Child.”

And bending low, she kissed my eyes,
While I reached up my arms to her;
I felt her glow, she heard my sighs —
O bit of earth that touched a star!

And then I dreamed that she did close
My eyes with kisses warm and soft —
And more than this, there’s no one knows,
I slept, and no one saw or heard.

What Happened in Her Garden

I

All in a bed, in a garden fair,
Were flowers sweet and flowers bright,
With grassy fringe and maidenhair,
And each one bloomed with all its might.

While some were short, and some were tall,
Each had its care, each had its plot,
For tender hands had tended all ;
Nor was there weed, nor barren spot.

A happy family they were,
Of brothers strong and sisters true,
Who talked among themselves of her
Who came each day some work to do.

Her little garden was her heart,
Expressed in flowers old and rare ;
Her love encompassed ev'ry part,
And in her measure each was fair.

And all loved her, as she loved them ;
Each gave to her its brightest hue ;
And as she passed, they kissed the hem
Of her pretty dress of silk and blue.

Or, when she stopped to smile on them,
Or, with her hands caressed a head,
The Lily nodded on her stem,
The Roses blushed a deeper red.

The Portulaca, just to gain
Her eye, crawled from her little bed,
And here she left a yellow stain,
And there she shone a richer red.

The Touch-me-not, of slender mien,
Would fold her leaves, like fingers crossed ;
The Pansy feared she was not seen ;
The Violet her odors tossed —

So each one in its ownest way,
Would greet the little gardener,
Who sang her songs, so blithe and gay,
And knew that all admired her.

II

And in that garden all went well,
Until a stranger came one day,
Of whom I'm now about to tell,
And all the things she had to say.

This stranger was a Hollyhock
That grew in some secluded place,
Until above a wall she shook
Her gaudy head and reddened face.

The more she grew, the more she stared,
And little ones in little beds
Were much amazed and still more scared,
Until in fear they hid their heads.

To them the stranger seemed a tall,
Thin woman, leaning on a fence;
Her hair uncombed, and scranny all,
Her face with angry red intense.

At first, at them she merely stared,
But as she grew to greater height,
She seemed to sneer, she, surely, glared,
And with her tongue began to fight.

And words like these at them she'd fling:
"You good for nothing little crew,
I never see you do a thing,
But keep your mistress in a stew.

" 'Twere not for her, weeds growing up,
Would choke your wiggly, wriggly necks,
Scarce big enough to hold you up —
I say, you look like little specks!"

Thus spoke the Hollyhock in wrath
To all the fearsome flowers grew
Along the pretty garden path,
Who hardly knew what they should do.

But, afterwhile, some grew more bold,
And tried to answer back in kind;
And then the Hollyhock would scold
The more, and speak her awful mind.

“I am the Hollyhock,” she cried
Aloud one day, with boastful glee;
“My greatness is by none denied,
I’m part of all the world you see;

“The sun himself salutes to me,
Whose colors rival all his own;
The birds that sing, find rest in me;
The winds caress me when I moan.”

“Oh, ho, I see,” th’ Sunflower said,
“It’s ‘how-dy-do,’ the sun must say;
I’ve wondered why the sun is red —
’Tis something I have learned today.

“I used to think I drew the sun
From eastern couch to western bed;
I used to think that it was done
Just by the turning of my head;

“But now I know what ne’er I knew:
The sun is just across the wall;
The speck that in the sky we view,
I find is not the sun at all.”

The flowers heard and all took heart,
They had a friend at last, they thought,
A friend who dared to take their part,
The kind of friend they long had sought.

“Oh, you are just a great big fool,”
Snapped back the angry Hollyhock;
“Your need is still to go to school;
Your brain’s a fuzzy, wuzzy shock.”

The big Sunflower cast a smile,
And turned his sunny head away:
“I do not think it worth my while
To answer her,” they heard him say.

“Pray, do not say another word,”
Whispered the little Violet;
“To argue more would be absurd,
The Hollyhock is all upset.”

“I think she knows no etiquette,”
The Lily said, the while she brushed
A speck of dust from off her hat,
“Her manners seem to be befrushed.”

“I wish she’d let me sleep a while,”
Spoke up the drowsy Four-o-clock;
“And yet, alack, she makes me smile,
That old and foolish Hollyhock.”

“We should be glad,” the Daisy whined,
“She does not throw a flask, or jug,
For, think of what a vicious mind
There must be back of such a mug.”

The Holly strained her neck to hear
The conversations in the bed;
They whispered things — that was quite clear;
She wondered much just what was said.

It peeved the Hollyhock, who said,
“Dish rags! — that’s all I think of you;
Just tattlers in a little bed —
A fig for what you say, or do!”

The Hollyhock remained ahead;
The little ones grew more afraid;
They hung each sweetened, saddened head,
Ashamed by half, and half afraid.

And each one thought: If She but knew!
Of all their troubles, none She heard;
They talked among themselves, 'tis true,
But none could speak a human word.

III

One day a blackish cloud came by,
It blew and still it blew and blew;
Made all the bending flowers cry —
They did not know just what to do.

They were a most unhappy lot;
Some shut their eyes, and some their lips;
The waters flooded all their plot;
The wind it stung with angry whips.

One gust caught haughty Hollyhock,
It bent and twisted ev'ry bone,
Until as with a mighty shock,
She broke, and fell just like a stone.

And all the flowers heard the break,
And heard the awful fall and roar ;
And ev'ry little heart did quake,
And wondered what was coming more.

The wind it stopped, just after this ;
Each flower raised its dripping head ;
The sun came out, gave each a kiss,
But proud Dame Hollyhock was dead.

In pearly drops of rain, like light,
Jack-in-the-Pulpit stood, and said,
“Oh, let us view this solemn sight
With downcast eyes, and hearts made sad.

“The Hollyhock was very proud,
And scolded modest folks like you,
Until there came an angry cloud,
And now I rather would be you.”

IV

And with the sun the gardener came,
In haste to comfort and to cheer ;
She called each pretty one by name,
With smiles, she drove away their fear.

She found the broken Hollyhock,
And lifted up the stalk aglow,
"Your strength could not withstand the shock,"
She sighed, "it was an awful blow."

And ev'ning came again, and night,
But all were filled with much alarm;
The flowers slept, but half in fright,
Each gust they feared would be a storm.

But in her bed of snowy white,
Their mistress slept all through the hours;
And on her face there was the light
Of things remembered from her flowers.

Passing Through the Woods

Oh, you and I, dear heart,
Have made a journey sweet;
We've borne a dreamy part,
As in some fairy play;
But now, at last, we spy
A big and darksome woods
Beneath a clouded sky —
It lies across our way.

For us the flowers bloomed,
For us the birds have sung,
And earth and sky assumed
Each day some fairer hue;
Our laughter, it has filled
Our little world with joy;
But now our hearts are stilled
By deeper tasks before.

We stand upon the brink,
Our lips still kiss the dreams;
We falter as we think
How fair it all has been;
But in the rising flood,
The sawdust in your dolls
Will turn to living blood;
And cares will bring new joys.

The things that have been dear,
By passing from your life,
In time will draw more near,
Like oft remembered love;
Time builds a sacred shrine
Where childhood's dream was fair;
Some melody divine
With each remembrance comes.

Whatever way we tread
In this our mortal life,
This woods, which all men dread,
Sometime, somehow, appears;
Its shadows are our fears,
Our troubles and our doubts;
It is the place of tears,
Where hearts are tried and found.

Here flowers withered are,
And tender hopes are crushed;
And night has not a star
In all its wind-swept sky;
The things belonged to youth
Here vanish all away;
While stern and solemn truth,
In somberness appears.

Some dangers here are real,
But many more are made
From things we merely feel,
And things that are not true;
Here all the goblin crew
That men have conjured up
As bogie, or as boo,
Like fearful shadows roam.

But we can have no fear,
We've wronged no living thing;
Our eyes are young and clear,
Our minds are on our task;
And thus equipped, we'll walk
All safe in brambly gloom,
And we shall laugh and talk
To make the darkness kind.

Perhaps some nightingale
Will think it is the night;
Or darkness may prevail
Upon the whippoorwill,
Which haunts the thickest wood,
To sing before his time;
If not, some inward good
Will sing us on our way.

Whole days we may not see
A living thing, nor hear
A song from bush, nor tree;
Great limbs, with hanging vines
Will shade the slip'ry ground;
Our feet will weary grow,
And when we look around
We'll nothing see but night.

'Twas here poor Bunyan tossed,
And found the Slough Despond;
Here little Bo-Peep lost
The sheep she could not find;
Here girls, their mothers gone,
Have often lost their way,
And little boys are drawn
By evil lurking hands.

But round about the woods
There lies a wonderland
Where live the sisterhoods
Of all the fairy books,
And Peter Pan, still dear,
And Little Wendy, too,
And all who are sincere,
And all the sunshine band.

Not you alone, nor I,
Must bear a burden here;
All men, if low or high,
Must penetrate the gloom;
And some who pass therein,
Find mud and night so deep,
They ne'er come out again,
They fail because they fear.

Some suffering may be,
Of weary feet and hands;
And some we can not see,
The aches of heart and mind,
The friends who will forget,
The disappointments sore
That sorrows will beget —
For things in here are life.

But those who have not walked
These darkened lanes of gloom,
And those who have not talked
With sorrow, face to face,
Are poor equipped for life;
Who has not suffered here,
No courage has in strife,
The strife for higher ends.

In these dark places lie
The secrets of the world,
Which are not seen by eye
That is undimmed with tears ;
From trials, courage springs,
Which is our greatest need ;
And hope from sorrow wrings
All tender sympathy.

'Tis for a little while !
And then a newer joy,
A deeper, gladder smile
Comes back in life enriched ;
Then flowers bloom again,
But with a deeper hue ;
Sweet as the dream has been,
The life will sweeter be.

So, if we persevere,
We'll see the sun again ;
And, freed from ev'ry fear,
By looking back, we'll know
That it was well we trod
The dark and toilsome way,
For while we bore the rod
We learned to live and love.

In the Sunshine Again

We're through the woods at last!
The sun again we greet;
However hard the task,
The victory is sweet;
We struggled in our might,
Grew strong by dangers scorning;
'Tis sorrow makes our night,
And joy that makes our morning.

But now we'll dread no more,
If other woods appear;
We never will detour,
And never more have fear;
If mind and heart are strong,
And right is on our side,
Then we can sing a song,
Whatever may betide.

I know our clothes are torn,
Our stockings down and frayed;
We still can feel the thorn,
And see the stains it made;
But gladness more is ours,
For we have killed the bears
That worried all our hours,
The bugaboos and scares.

Life's troubles may press down,
And wrongs may cares beget,
The smile may be a frown—
You must not care for that;
However it may be,
And whether good or ill,
Be brave, and you will see
The sun is shining still.

Oh, life will puzzle you,
As it has puzzled me;
And many things to do,
Will useless seem and be;
You oft will wonder why
Some burden falls on you,
But while you grieve and sigh,
A song is born in you.

And keep a merry heart;
Think not to do it all;
Just learn to do your part,
And see you do not fall;
There will be error left
When you have ceased to be;
The world of grief bereft,
Alas, will never be.

I envy you the quest
That life still has for you;
The dearest and the best
Is the unfolding view
Of things — of love, of life,
And what they're all about;
The peace that follows strife,
As things are straightened out.

PART VI

Somewhat Seriously

Take These, Also

Now, having heaped your basket full,
With flowers and with rhyme,
I ask a little room for these,
Some vagaries of mine.

The while I thought and wrote for you,
These also came to me;
To you, some day, such thoughts may come,
For you will older be.

The visions come to all, some time;
We all have hopes and fears,
Anticipations and regrets,
And smiles, sweet-mixed with tears

I have no other place for these,
Except your little heart;
And so I'll print them in your book,
And then, alas, we part.

Some comfort for your years, I pray
That these frail lines may be;
For me, if they are read by you,
Some immortality.

In Her Own Country

The road winds up, the road winds down,
And high the house upon the hill!
It looks on valley and on town,
On wooded stream and fertile field.

The pretty village clusters low,
Where turbulent the river flows;
Then hills rise up to meet the skies,
And end where the horizon glows.

In early spring the thrill of life
Runs o'er the plain, and up the heights;
In autumn, tints of brown and gold
Burst into domes of crimson lights.

The summer sun, it shimmers on
The pines, while rays are sifted through
On leafy beds so soft and sweet,
One's glad with nothing much to do.

We watched the cattle on the hills
And heard the distant tinkling bell,
From dewy morn to drowsy noon,
From noon to shades that night foretell.

And never smiled a bluer sky,
And never shone the stars more bright,
Than skies that nestle o'er those hills,
Than stars that shine on them at night.

Iowa

O land of undulating swell,
Ten thousand thousand acres broad ;
Whose fertile hills and valleys fell
From the eternal hand of God,
O Iowa, my Iowa !

Sweet are thy winds, and green thy fields
And wooded slopes that shade thy streams ;
Land ev'ry fruit and blessing yields,
Where duty glows and beauty gleams,
O Iowa, fair Iowa !

Thy corn grows on a thousand hills,
It ripens in thy golden suns ;
Thy grains are heaped in mighty mills,
Thy droves and herds are endless runs,
O Iowa, rich Iowa !

Thy men are strong, O make them just !
Thy women fair, O keep them pure !
A race of men who dare and must,
Of virile virtues that endure,
O Iowa, dear Iowa !

The 137th Psalm in Iowa

By the rivers of Iowa,
Our hearts rejoicing, we sit down,
And there we sing the song of gladness,
Be it in country or in town.

Our harps we hang upon the willows,
Our eyes we fix upon the glow
That fills the world, from earth to heaven,
O kindest land, where'er we go!

And by her glory carried captive,
With raptured hearts we sing her song;
We will not waste her mighty substance,
For here our children tarry long.

We sing the song of Iowa,
The Lord's own song in His own land;
And we will not forget her ever,
Nor lose the cunning of our hand.

And who will not remember kindly,
This primal daughter of the free,
From out her land let him be driven,
Her glory never more to see.

And happy shall we be forever,
In land that's not to be destroyed,
And which rewardeth all in plenty,
Whose hearts and hands are well employed.

The Ways I Walked With Her

These ways are mine, my ways supreme;
O'er glowing hill, in shady glade,
On quiet quests for spots serene;
And they are ways no man has made.

Along these ways, in years gone by,
Walked one of sweetened heart and mind;
Ofttimes to smile, sometimes to sigh,
But never with a thought unkind.

She loved the fields of corn and wheat;
She loved the sight of feeding kine;
And for the grass that pressed her feet,
She felt some pity that was fine.

Though dear to her the fields of thrift,
The flowered fields were no less dear,
From tender spring to autumn's gift
That crowns the gladsome floral year.

She did her work, a woman's work,
She toiled as in the wilderness;
Her heart dared all, except to shirk,
Yet never lost its gentleness.

Years since she ceased to walk these ways,
But still the sweetness of her life
Is wafted through these golden days,
With tenderness, dissolving strife.

Because of her, how dear this earth
Now seems to me; how sweet these ways
In which she walked; and oh, my dearth
Of words for those remembered days!

In ev'ry fragrant breeze that blows
There is for me some thought of her;
And all the light in heaven glows
Seems light of her, and thought of her.

In moments sweet beyond control,
The presence, exquisite and rare,
Of her immaculated soul,
For me is here, and ev'rywhere.

Some light unseen, some silent song,
I hear in bush, or see in sward,
The while in dreams I walk along
Her ways, the ways of heavenward.

One Tribute Yet Remains

One tribute yet remains unsaid,
One tribute that the world forgets ;
The man who dies, in battle led,
Who carves a stone, or makes a law,
Who's strong of heart, or great of head,—
His praises are on lips of men
While still he lives ; and when he's dead,
On monument and epitaph.

The mothers sleep unknown to fame ;
All weary of the toil, they passed
To the eternal rest that came
To them, with all their duties done ;
If, casu'ly, some sweetened name
Is mentioned on the lips of praise,
The words are lost in the acclaim
That greets the deeds the sons have wrought.

O mother of the potent child !
O soother of the sterner will !
Through all the clamor of the wild,
Your praises, still unsung, I sing ;
Your love supreme, your manner mild,
In them were shaped the form and mind ;
In them the strife was reconciled,
Through which his mighty works were done.

Though he the doer of the deed,
The maker of the deed were you ;
In you the potent, pregnant seed
Of ev'ry glory fills the world !
For still the product of his mind
Was first the product of your heart ;
And what his hand has wrought in kind
Was first and last conceived in you.

Who gives a child, gives more than all ;
No book, no stone, no battle won,
But into some decay will fall ;
Her heart lives on, her work goes on,
All heedless that the final call
May come in sorrow, or despair —
The product of her womb is all
Of human immortality.

A Remembrance

O friend unseen, and half unknown,
Elusive spirit blest!

Beyond my reach, but still my own,
O dearest and O best!

Sweet thoughts of you in ev'ry line,
Your smiles in ev'ry word;

O these are mine, and still not mine,
But music I have heard.

As streams that through the meadows flow,
Their banks with flowers lined,
So thoughts of you still come and go,
And murmur through my mind.

I would that I could better sing!
With better instrument
Recall the melodies that cling,
Their music all unspent!

If but a passing glance I caught,
Of all that were so fair,
If but a single truth I taught,
Of all that we did share!

The years have deepened more the thought,
And sweetened what was sweet;
And in remembrance this I wrought,
To lay at absent feet.

I Stand and Wait

I stand and wait for you,
The stars are clear and high,
And sweet and fresh the dew
Is falling from the sky.

I stand and wait for you,
My heart with love is thrilled ;
My mind with things to do,
To show my love, is filled.

Nights come and go, and years,
And still I stand and wait ;
My eyes are wet with tears,
So far your heav'nly gate !

The whippoorwill has made
His lonely call afar ;
The thrush sings in the glade,
As fades the morning star.

I stand and wait for you
When moon and stars are bright,
And trees are wrapped in dew —
Until the morning light !

The Returning

The grass seems greener, dear;
It smiles beneath our feet;
The winds are gentle here,
The rain is soft and sweet.

No harsher note from bird,
Or insect mars the air;
But music we have heard,
For here our dream was fair.

'Tis here we talked of love,
And here the world was good,
While silver moons above
In blessed halos stood.

What hopes were uttered here,
What dreams of things to do;
And then we waited, dear,
Oh, waited in the dew!

It seems so long ago,
So many, many years;
But still the currents flow,
Enriched by silent tears.

We pass along in years,
But time is always young;
They smile upon our fears,
They sing our songs unsung.

They come the while we go,
Our visions they will see ;
Oh, may they never know
How sad the end may be !

What matters it, my dear,
The dreams are vanished all ?
The moon is shining here,
And still the night birds call.

Of old they called to Ruth,
When love becalmed her night ;
One everlasting truth,
And one eternal light !

Now gently blows the wind,
And softly falls the rain ;
The grass is green and kind,
As mindful of our pain.

Lines on a Glorious Woman

Her lips were morning and her hair was night,
All glorious she stood before my sight ;
I wondered how such loveliness could be,
And what the art and what the alchemy
Could form and fashion such a perfect creature,
Aglow with light, a thrill in ev'ry feature.

All radiant with life and flushed with youth,
The flowers which she wore seemed half uncouth ;
The day that wrapped her in its gorgeous light,
Seemed like a candle struggling in the night,
Compared with all the life that in her shone,
Exalting and exulting in its own.

O youth, O beauty, and O womanhood,
Fairest of all and best of all that's good !
Impulse of God, first thought and last design
In that great scheme that made this world divine ;
The holy place where earth and heaven met,
Where God his last and best approval set.

When Farrar Sings

When Farrar sings the waters turn
Their course, and o'er some dripping rock
They trickle down on moss and fern,
When Farrar sings.

When Farrar sings the night wind woos
The flowers and the quaking leaves,
In forests gladdened by the dews,
When Farrar sings.

When Farrar sings the moonlight falls
In splendors of a silver flood,
On roses on the garden walls,
When Farrar sings.

When Farrar sings a peace abides
On multitudes, like windless snows
That fall upon the mountain sides,
When Farrar sings.

When Farrar sings, O then, each song
Is like a year in paradise!
Each song too short, each wait too long,
When Farrar sings.

The Sun and the Earth

The sun the wooer is,
The earth the wooed;
In heat and rain he comes
To earth subdued.

He gathers up the clouds
From distant seas,
He spreads them on the land,
With ev'ry breeze.

The dead, it comes to life;
The thrill of love
Runs o'er the naked earth,
He smiles above.

The eager earth grows flushed,
And throbs with life
Beneath the kisses of the sun,
O stress and strife!

She glows in myriad bloom,
Love sings her tune
From out a thousand throats,
From March to June.

And from her garnered love
Come forth her yields,
Of fruit and golden grain,
In all the fields.

In brown and red and gold,
His kisses fade,
When all his work is done,
O'er hill and glade.

The Out-of-Door

To lie upon the earth, and look
Upon the sky that spreads above ;
To hear the murmurs of the air,
All pregnant with the thoughts of love !

To drop from out the petty cares,
The weariness of babbled things ;
To know how great and grand is God,
And Nature, as it endless sings !

It is the balm of Gilead,
The goal for which the Spaniard fought,
The life, the health of all the world,
The joy through all the ages sought.

The buoyant air no wrinkles wears ;
No faded colors dim the sun ;
They make the glow, the steady hand,
The mind that never is undone.

It is so fine, this out-of-door,
So dear and sweet, so fresh and strong ;
I love it all — oh, more and more
I want to take it in my arms.

Go Forth Again Unto the Soil

Rome died and rotted in the marts she cherished,
And Greece in all her temples fine, she perished,
While from the fields and forests of the north,
Red-blooded came the Teuton marching forth.

In sun and soil strong men their cities raised,
In hut and palace grew the vices razed
Their proudest works, their civ'lizations fine,
Their systems and their faiths made superfine.

For men, like trees, are nurtured in the sun,
Like trees in shadows they are still undone ;
The blood is but the sun re-shaped for use,
Mildewed and weak and vicious in abuse.

Go forth into the fields, ye nations proud,
Absorb the sun, the lightning from the cloud,
And build your stronger and your saner man,
The man who will be king, because he can.

Throw off the shackles of the sickly crowd,
Where men decay and vices sap the proud,
Where men are atoms microbes feed upon,
Until in one aenemic mass they're drawn.

You huddle up, en masse, you spurn the God
Who calls His own upon the rugged sod ;
Go forth again, be strong, and glad, and free,
Delve in the earth and prune the vine and tree.

One Lesson Learn

One lesson I would leave with you,
A lesson for your growing years:
Learn nature's ways, and nature love;
The earth below, the sky above,
The grass, the flowers, and the trees,
The hills, the hollows, and the streams;
And all the varied life they hold,
And all the glory that is theirs.

And if you have the love of fields,
And of the sky that bends above,
Radiant with light, or gray with clouds,
Or studded with the stars at night,
Your mind will move in grander ways,
Your heart the sweeter music feel;
Who lives in love with these will walk
In some divine companionship.

The heart that loves these sweeter things,
The mind that grasps these deeper thoughts,
Is mind serene and heart enthralled;
And you will ever blessed be,
The best of all the good inhaling,
The best of all the good exhaling,
Enriching and endearing self,
And blessing lives that touch with thine.

So, pluck the flower, love it more,
And thoughtly walk upon the grass
That weaves its carpet for your feet;
Make friendships with the birds and beasts
That nurture in the fields, or trees,
That do their tasks and sing their songs;
And look upon the stars at night,
And ask their blessings on your head.

A Fairyland for Big Folks

There are no noisy streets in that dear land,
No houses and no fields which I call mine,
Or thine; but all for each and each for all—
Such is the law of that dear land.

There are no joys in that dear land of dreams
Which are not shared by all, and, being shared,
Are multiplied a hundredfold, or more—
Such are the joys of that dear land.

There are no anxious cares in that dear land,
No griefs that I must bear alone, or thou
Alone; thy cares are mine and mine are thine—
Such is the love of that dear land.

In that dear land all things in common are,
No hard conditions beating out the lives
Of men; no unrequited love, nor toil—
All men are rich in that dear land.

In that dear land no love is e'er denied,
No laws restrain, for love and law are one,
And what is good is all, and ill is none—
Truth makes men free in that dear land.

The Snow

In beauty falls the snow,
All purity its glow;
On bush and spar its traceries,
On ev'ry tree its draperies;
In moonlight soft and sunlit glare,
As white as robes that angels wear.

It makes the darkest night
A glorious sheen of light;
And spreading elms of awesome height,
In fairy robes bewitch the night;
While ev'ry star in heaven glows,
Shines brighter mirrored in the snows.

And this the loveliest,
Becomes the mightiest;
When swept by winds, in eddies hurled,
It stops the traffic of a world;
No might on earth is mightier,
No sight in heaven is sightlier.

In blinding sheets it whirls,
It tosses, sweeps, and swirls,
Until the sky in earth is lost,
And earth in sky seems madly tossed;
And, oh, the glory of its might!
And, oh, the grandeur of its sight!

Fairyland

Some call it heaven blest, and some, Utopia,
But children call it simply fairyland;
The dream of little ones, the hope of men,
The speculation of the merely wise.

Wise men have written it in books of state,
From Attic Plato to Sir Thomas More;
From Bunyan's dream to her in Wonderland,
It is the self same thing, just fairyland.

The land that's far behind, or 'way ahead,
That's up above, or in some grotto strange;
Where ev'ry thing is what it ought to be—
Each one begins in children's fairyland.

Nor has it been in vain; the thoughts of men
Are widened by the visions of the seers;
And in the laws of states the poet's dream
May be the mitigating circumstance.

In fairyland, whose gates are still ajar—
But closed except you enter as a child—
The generations of the world have learned
God's mercy and our human tenderness.

Our Thanksgiving

Now we give thanks,
Give thanks for all we have;
For all we are,
For all we hope to be,
In life, or death.

For food and drink,
But not for meat alone;
For right to live,
For health and happiness,
For wealth indeed.

Our hearts are full;
Our hands are filled with gifts,
All gifts from Thee;
Our tables groan with cheer,
All cheer from Thee.

If any be
Who lack of food or drink,
Bring them to us,
That we may share with them
Our share from Thee.

Above all else,
Beyond all other gifts,
We thank Thee, Lord,
For grace and gratitude,
And thankfulness.

Like Children 'Round a Christmas Tree

The blessed season comes again, of peace on earth,
Good will and love, of charity, of joy and mirth,
When we exalt the Child and Mary's Motherhood,
And hearts are sweetened by some universal good.

Some thought of holiness, some sense of mystery,
Oh, we, in admiration lost, can see in Thee ;
Deep awed, by love for men, we follow Thee afar,
As men of yore did follow some directing star.

We also seek the light, wherever it may be,
However dimly it may shine on land or sea ;
The night is dark, the way is new ; as in a dream
We journey on, and contemplate the things that
seem.

We cannot comprehend it all, but still we care ;
We delve into the earth, we penetrate the air,
And faith increases from within until we see
Ourselves as children playing 'round a Christmas
tree.

The world so full of mystery, the stars that shine
In visions infinite, bind us to Thee and Thine,
All children of one brotherhood, one faith, one
love,
Our little darkness brightened by a light above.

If She Imagines Things

If she imagines things,
Then blessings on the gift
That brings on airy wings,
Its pleasures rich and swift!

Without her make-believes,
She's sister to the tree
That's cradled in the breeze,
Sans human sympathy.

They are the memory
Of some celestial birth;
Unreconciled to be
Re-made to fit this earth.

A soul in flight was caught
In your outreaching arm;
And, stranger to your thought,
It flutters, fearing harm.

Oh, do not hamper it,
Nor dim its rosy bloom;
For greater things it's fit,
For greater things make room.

Estranged, it beats its wings
Against new destiny,
Until at last it sings
In its captivity.

Oh, guide her visioned mind,
And nurture well her heart,
Until she fills in kind
All her imagined part.

And worry, weary not,
But let her fancy play;
The world and life are what
She thinks they are today.

The growth of mind and heart,
Is round the things that seem;
And some immortal part
Is found in childhood's dream.

The feeling to be kind
Is seldom born of facts;
But it is born of mind,
When imagination acts.

So, visions let her see,
Not merely things that are;
Then things that ought to be,
Will be the things that are.

His and Mine

He has a few, and I have none;
He says the happy man is he;
He thinks my life will be undone,
When earth has closed its gates on me.

He has his loves, and I have mine;
His heart is wrapped in only two;
I have not learned his magic "mine,"
My own are many, his are few.

For God at last was good; to him
Who had no little ones his own,
He gave the vision from within
To build himself a childland throne.

He filled this land with prettiness;
To it they came a trooping band,
In ev'ry kind of loveliness,
As many as the grains of sand.

Of varied gifts, his little girls;
With eyes of blue, or eyes of jet,
With hair like night, or golden curls;
But none of all that make him fret.

And never ill, they never cry;
They sleep in cradles made of air;
Their feet on earth, or in the sky,
They dance for him, his maidens fair.

What matters it, they are not real ?
For that they seem more true and strong,
And growing up, remain ideal,
In nothing plain, in nothing wrong.

The more they came, the more he thought
To bring his mental brood some cheer ;
He searched all lands, all books he sought
To find the things to childhood dear.

And so he made this book of verse,
Of things and moods, of tears and smiles ;
He wrote for better, or for worse,
For now, and for the afterwhiles.

Each happy moment this may hold,
For most, or least of all who read,
Will be to him like precious gold,
For all he's hoped in vain, the meed.

So God is good, and nothing wrong ;
And well be all that are on earth !
All life and love, triumphal song,
From cradled birth to cradled earth !

The Patter of a Baby's Feet

Last night I dreamed I heard the patter of
A baby's feet outside my open door;
I sat among my books, the dim light fell
On faded faces in their faded frames;
Alone with them, 'twas there and thus I dreamed
I heard the patter of a baby's feet.

And what were books, or pictures on the wall,
Or heaps of gold, compared with what I dreamed?
I watched the creepy shadows in the hall,
It seemed so strange I feared it could not be;
And then dreamed on—I thought I saw her come,
All dressed in white, and her dishevelled hair!

I closed my musty books, my eyes I closed;
I thought it was a rose that smelled so sweet,
Subduing all my senses with delights;
Some rose which she had worn in nights gone by
Smelled sweet to me, while dreaming in my room,
O dreaming of the patter of a baby's feet!

And, after awhile, I thought I saw her face;
Her lips were morning and her hair was night,
Her eyes, sweet words to softest music sung;
I saw her all, I still remembered all,
Across the years, across the weary miles,
While dreaming of the patter of a baby's feet.

A dream it was, no more; a fantasy
Was born where hope still strove against regret;
The rhapsody of clouds o'er desert sands!
The dreary books, the pictures on the walls;
All emptiness, all weariness — all else,
But not the patter of a baby's feet!

L'Envoi — Dream Children

You have your children, I have mine;
Yours came to you in flesh and blood,
But mine in fancies and in rhyme,
Like roses ever in the bud.

Born of my heart, of love begot,
How real the magic of their smiles;
What more could heaven itself allot
Than joys that heaven itself beguiles?

These little waifs, so motherless,
And strangers in a stranger land,
May love of others them encompass —
Caressed, oh, by some mother's hand!

These fairy children of the mind
Are always dear to those who dream,
Who, having none, still yearn in kind
For those that are through those that seem.

PART VII

Some Visions and a Prelude

The Introduction

*I asked my girl what it should be,
If something I would write for her;
"Write me the moon and stars," said she;
And so I wrote this dream for her.*

*She thought they sang to her, at night,
The moon and stars — and, O! why not?
The undulating waves of light
May music make that she can hear.*

*Why call it idle fantasy?
Who dares to limit what we are,
And who can fix our bounds to-be?
Can we be less than we can think?*

*And so I think, and so I write,
And moon and stars I bring today,
And heap them in her lap like toys —
They are for her who's more than they.*

*For laws and systems come and go,
And worlds decay, by age grown dim;
But love itself no end can know —
Itself the spirit and the end.*

*It animates the matter-world,
And yet itself no matter is;
Divine like God, and many pearl'd,
It glows with the eternal light.*

The Prelude on Earth

O, little ones, your quests are true!
Of earth and star, and moon and sky,
We know but little more than you;
We ask, but there is no reply.

We smile at questions children ask,
We think that we know more than they;
But in our smiles, as in a mask,
We hide the doubts that mar our way.

We think we see a little farther,
We think we know a little more;
We know there's still a something farther,
And we are hardly past the door.

If we could reach the farthest star,
Ten thousand years of light away,
We'd only know we'd traveled far,
But had not reached the break of day.

'Tis true we play upon some beach
Where unknown oceans lie before;
And what is still beyond our reach,
With knowledge grows, becoming more.

Along the great abyss of years
We crawl like children in our time;
And all our days are filled with fears
That alternate with hopes sublime.

We bow our heads beneath the trees,
We stoop to pick the violet;
With rapture thrilled we bend our knees,
Our hearts can not our words beget.

But bowed, or kneeling, know no more
Of lowly bloom, or lordly star,
Than children who with stumbling feet
Go past the door was left ajar.

We know the violet is blue,
But who the alchemist divine,
Who made the petal's tender hue,
And left the odor of a soul?

We know the orbits and the girth
Of stars that fill our span of sky,
But what the mind that gave them birth,
And what the hand that holds them high?

We study, wonder, and we sigh,
In ev'ry quest we find a rout;
The problems all unsolved, we die,
And death but deepens more the doubt.

We stand upon the unknown shore,
We sail upon the unknown sea,
The God we do not know, implore,
And all we know is yet to be.

We cry, oh, death, where is thy sting,
The grave defy, and heav'n adore;
But what a gift and holy thing,
Is life, if death left nothing more!

And all that's more is human gain,
The gift of some omnipotence;
For all our work, and all our pain,
This life alone is recompense.

To eat and drink and die, O Soul,
Is older than the flagoned song
Which one has sung as fated dole,
And hopeless cheer for dying throng.

There is a deeper purpose in
This life, howe'er beset with doubt;
The will and conscience sit within,
And opportunity, without.

This life is not a revelry;
But solemn, beautiful, it flows
Through fields of thought and mystery —
A paean or a prayer — who knows?

Nor yet is found divine command
To mar the beauty of the world,
To bind the free, to maim the hand
That grasps the pleasures all unfurled.

The freest thought of human mind,
The noblest worship is of God;
Who dares to think, he cannot find
A wrath of heav'n, or curse of God.

God thunders not at Sinai,
He battles not at Armageddon,
To conquer, or to terrify—
In mercy, justice moveth on.

All what we see, all that is God,
Expressed, still unexpressed is He;
In distant star, in blooming sod,
Alike His great eternity.

One perfect prayer, I do not know;
And man the chief of mysteries,
The one who stops, a day or so,
Betwixt his two eternities.

The retrospect of life, and all
The glimpse of that which is to come,
Alike is bounded by a wall
Which reason can not overcome.

Hemmed in around, above, below,
We stagger and we struggle on,
Pursuing what we do not know,
Until 'tis said of each, he's gone.

The flowers bloomed, the leaves were sere,
What was, that went, what is, remained ?
The one is clay, the one was dear,
And what was lost, and what was gained ?

We listen, but no answer hear ; —
Why seek the riddle to disclose ?
We know the life itself is dear,
Its spirit sweeter than the rose.

Then, love the life, inhale it deep,
Rejoice exceedingly, be glad ;
An immortality may sleep,
In mortal vestments, God-like, clad.

The joy is here, the fruit is there,
And life is brief with which we cope ;
Exultant live, where all is fair,
Exalted die, where all is hope.

If ever sadder grows the laughter,
So ever sweeter grows the hope ;
The more we seem to see hereafter,
The less we have with which to cope.

And doubt remains a mental sphere ;
We end each tale where we began ;
We know the power brought us here,
Can safely take us back again.

The Invocation to Immortality

Eternal hope, eternal theme,
Eternal man, eternal God!
Sweetest of all the things that seem,
The star that rises in our sod!

Ten million million men have said
Thy prayers and at thy altars knelt;
Thou art the fountain ever fed,
The craving that's forever felt.

To live, and then to live again,
To taste anew the joy of life,
To mend the wrong, to cleanse the stain
That we have made in haste and strife.

And all our hopes forever seek
The perfect life, by nothing marred;
By love encompassed, sweet and meek,
By no diseases weary scarred.

Imperfect into perfect made!
The flitting, fleeting brevity,
That's now in sun and now in shade,
Made changeless in eternity!

The vision comes, the vision goes;
The fear grows weak, the hope grows strong;
Forever and forever flows
In human heart thy God-like song.

I. The Vision of the Heavenly Lane

O sweet, my love, the other day,
Beneath these trees, before the sun,
I thought I saw an endless way
In which we walked when life was done.

Alone I watched, in early dawn,
The rosy glow on azure hue;
With all your curtains still undrawn,
By fading stars, I dreamed of you.

The path I saw, it climbed the sky,
Rose eastward, upward, oh, forever;
Beyond where strongest birds can fly,
Beyond the stress of stormy weather.

It was not strait, nor was it wide,
With roses on the balustrades,
And clinging vines the lines to hide,
And here and there, wide esplanades.

Its farther end upon a star,
It hung beneath the dying moon,
As slender as a crimson bar
Sent upward into heaven's noon.

An endless vista of delight,
I could not tell what held it there;
I only saw the heavenly sight,
I only knew that it was fair.

II. *The Vision of Our Journeying*

And in my dream, it seemed, we passed
That way, as on a journey bent,
Where time and distance both had passed
Away, their limitations spent.

And arm in arm, and hand in hand,
Or now my arm around your waist,
Like lovers walking through the land,
We went, with never any haste.

More perfect ev'ry day grew love,
And sweeter ev'ry day seemed life,
And clearer shone the light above,
More faint the memory of strife.

A million years our journey was,
But never did we have a care;
No fears, no obstacles, no flaws,
No weariness was anywhere.

Nor idled we away our time,
But tasks we found for hand and mind;
We studied in the books sublime;
We loved the work that we did find.

Enthralled we heard great symphonies,
The symphonies of stars that shone;
We walked enwrapt in ecstacies,
For what we felt, no words were known.

The stars made music to our ears,
The waves of light were sensate sound ;
It was the music of the spheres,
All harmonized with all around.

I felt you draw more close to me,
I heard you murmur of a bliss
So sweet you feared it could not be ;
And all my answer was a kiss.

How exquisite the touch of you,
A woman still, with woman's range ;
What joy was ours, for then we knew
The sense of sex survived our change.

The sweet deliciousness we knew
When first we loved when first we met,
Seemed now forever young and new ;
There were no bounds that God had set.

III. *The Vision of the Celestial Glory*

We saw the moon, the planets all,
The shooting stars and meteors;
We thought we heard the angels call;
It was the music of the stars.

Oh, never was the scene the same;
The new unfolded day by day,
And gorgeous visions went and came,
Strange lights and glowing nebula.

We saw the tinted mists of stars;
Far streaming lights, and shadows cast
By distant worlds; great banners, bars,
And aureoles swept grandly past.

The golden argosies of God
On ether moved through seeming space;
Nowhere a scepter, nor a rod,
By law of love, each in its place.

We saw no voids, no space in sleep;
But rivers ran to crystal seas,
Through crystal hills and valleys deep,
With crystal grass and crystal trees.

And some were green, and some were blue,
With placid bank, or rugged shore,
In beauty carved, in matchless hue —
No scene was less, but each was more.

IV. *The Vision of Endless Creation*

The things we had not dreamed, we saw,
And what had seemed was space, was filled
With life, but by another law,
Whose great pulsations never stilled.

And life was all, for death was none,
Nor measured by the human span;
Creation's work was never done,
Its changes through the ages ran.

We saw the spiral nebulae,
Some young, and others, ages old,
Great systems, forming, worlds to be,
The wonders never can be told.

Some shone like vap'rous clouds, enmassed;
In some an embryonic sun
Glowed red, and glittered as it passed,
Like miracles of life begun.

New starry clusters swung in space,
The one beyond the other laid,
Endless their glory, and their race;
We stood amazed, but undismayed.

Sometimes, afar, we saw and heard
The meeting of the heav'nly spheres,
New births of worlds for which no word
In any human speech appears.

'Twas like two died, and one was born,
Two ceased to be that one might be; .
But as the day comes from the morn,
So were such births all orderly.

Sometimes a world in fragments blown,
Would stagger in its orbits lost,
And wander through the skies unknown,
By stronger forces pulled, or tossed,

Until the greater law re-fixed
Its orbit and its destiny;
Or, with some passing star was mixed
Its matter through eternity.

And all the worlds moved grandly by,
The mighty spaces unperturbed;
A drop fell from a clouded sky,
And then the sea was undisturbed.

The workshops of our God we saw,
The ceaseless energy divine;
In ev'ry atom worked His law,
In ev'ry beam His face did shine.

And then we learned, for then we saw,
No dormant bodies static lie;
But transformation is the law
Throughout the universal sky.

Life seems to pass, and nature sleeps,
But life renewed appears again;
Dynamic is the force that sweeps,
And irresistible the gain.

The forces of the heat and light,
They die in one, are born in one,
The bearers of creative might,
Grow never less, are never done.

And naught created ever dies,
Or else creation were a lie;
And age is change that death defies,
The dread of earth is hope of sky.

So nature worked her vaster plans,
On stars as on our bits of sod;
The hand that all the heaven spans,
Is patient as the love of God.

And what a thing the mind that grasps
The wonders of the worlds unseen;
And what a thing the heart that clasps
The universe in love serene!

V. The Vision of the Struggling World

And through the winding mist and smoke
 Around the far receding earth,
We saw a surging mass that spoke
 The constant clamor of despair.

Now faint, now sharp, we heard the cries.
 The moanings of a sorrowed world;
The groans of men, and women's sighs,
 In chorus through the spaces whirled.

We thought they came from all the earth,
 As from a mass of life upturn,
In land of drouth, in land of dearth,
 Of hope bereft, of God forlorn.

We saw a man, of strident voice,
 Who led them up a mountain side,
Unreasoned men who could rejoice
 In what was talked in pomp and pride.

But what was willed, they did not know;
 For lust they lived, for glory died,
Whene'er they could no farther go;
 And those who lived, they sat and cried.

Some weeping, failed, some fighting, fell,
 And some in drunken stupor died;
A gasp — there was no more to tell —
 And many thought that God had lied.

They stormed some frowning citadel
Of wealth, of power, and of law;
Like leaves they blew, like leaves they fell,
But freedom did not closer draw.

The brawling ranter who disturbs
The minds of men, all tense and pent,
Who knows no laws, and puts no curbs
Upon unreason, mischief-bent,

Of him a leader they had made,
And him they followed, passion-filled,
In reckless rout, in bootless raid,
Until their blood in vain was spilled.

And other thousands knelt in dust,
Imploring mercy from their God,
Whose righteous laws their sons had thrust
In yawning graves beneath the sod.

Beneath the battle's awful smoke,
That rolled from down the mountain side,
They prayed aloud, their bosoms smote,
For pardon begged, for mercy cried.

But still the legions fiercely fought,
With lust of blood, in mad despair;
For vengeance swore, for glory sought,
With flashing sword, in powder's glare.

Still others but on pleasure bent,
In gorgeous raiments laughed and danced,
And slept by day, when night was spent,
Nor fore, nor aft, they thought or glanced.

And through the noise we heard the cry
Of one who brought a newer creed;
He cried his message from on high,
The panacea for their need.

Another came and brought his cure
For all of human ill and woe;
To free the bound, make rich the poor,
To cleanse the state as white as snow.

The surging hordes swept after each;
Excelsior, cried in loud acclaim;
But still the goal beyond their reach,
They left their leaders to their shame.

And justice failed and mercy died;
In church and state, in mart and hall,
In vain they sought, in vain they cried,
While vengeful time stood over all.

The fact, not truth, that some must toil
In filth that some may live in glory,
That some may reap who till no soil,
Remained the theme of human story.

The dreamer and the demagogue,
Now one, and then the other, swayed
The human mass, in mist and fog,
And human progress still delayed.

But laws they piled on laws, until
Their burden was too great to bear;
And conscience lost its God-like will,
In petty rules and precepts fair.

They patched old error with the new,
Each evil with some evil wrought;
They cursed the good, they shunned the true,
And lost the sight of what they sought.

And what was bad, they made it worse;
And what was good, they marred and spoiled;
The wheels of progress did reverse,
The world wept sore and sorer toiled.

The competition and the clash,
The fevered life, the sudden death,
The tongue of demagogue, the flash
Of saber's blade and dagger's stealth;

The struggle and the strife, the tears
From staring eyes in bodies spent
In endlessness of hopes and fears —
All these we saw through curtains rent.

VI. The Vision of the West

We saw a wave of deep unrest,
With old devices, new unfurled;
And like a storm from out the west,
It swept in havoc 'round the world.

A newer race in newer land,
With ancient problems newly solved,
As with the lightning in their hand,
Upon still greater hopes resolved.

The common man a king they made,
With sovereign right to make his laws;
Now one against himself arrayed,
He battered down his selfish walls.

Enslaved no more by kings, but by
Himself, once more he would be free,
And so, with banners flying high,
He sought his great expectancy.

All heedless of the ancient truth,
First, perfect man, then, perfect state,
He held the state must be uncouth
Where men still fear and hesitate.

Nor we, nor he could see the end,
But marching in some mighty way,
He will his newer rights defend,
And seek to reach his better day.

From turmoil comes man's deepest thought,
By striving, struggling he achieves —
The man as great as what he sought,
As strong as what he deep believes.

He dies who stays to guard his own ;
He lives who moves to higher things,
Still seeking truth upon her throne,
And hearing hope, which ever sings.

On ev'ry page the tale is told,
And who can read, he must believe,
That men are poor by what they hold,
And men are rich by what they leave.

But hasten not, O myriad West !
For patiently the good is wrought,
And there must be a time for rest,
A time to build, a time for thought.

The centuries that now are dead,
Have bloody been with your unrest ;
Your hopes the countless millions led,
And still the world has lived unblest.

The never ending struggle stirred
Your younger blood, from out your west ;
But lack of wisdom has deferred
The noble ends of holy quest.

Be patient you who are so strong ;
Hold fast the old, while seeking new ;
What men have sought the ages long,
Not in a day is given you.

Oh, still your higher purpose hold,
Your great ideals cherish deep ;
If they seem new, they still are old,
They were when time was still in sleep.

Until your perfect men arrive,
By slow degrees you must ascend ;
You, too, like Moses still must strive,
And die, but never see the end.

The way is long, the hill is high,
And you must firmly build the road ;
And take some thought, while passing by,
And sweeter make your day's abode.

With easements still, oh, smooth the way,
And do the best you can, O West !
The world is marching into day,
But step by step is nation's quest.

VII. *The Vision of Woman's Strife*

But once in all the time you wept,
How I was grieved to see you weep ;
The light grew dim, and nature slept,
At grief so great and pain so deep.

Upon the distant earth a gloom
Had fallen like the deepest night,
And women, like a stroke of doom,
They fought to reach some fancied right.

The sovereign woman cried aloud,
Both sex and chivalry suppressed ;
In sweeping mob and jeering crowd
Her reeking discontent expressed.

And what a worthless thing it seemed,
The babbled, baubled thing she sought ;
And what a pity, thus demeaned,
Oh, she who all our good has wrought !

We thought the more alike they grew,
The less the potency of sex ;
That many things they sought to do,
But multiplied the things that vex.

For still it is, as still it seems,
From height to depth the current flows ;
The man as strong as what she dreams,
And she as good as what he knows.

But in the farther sense, their strife
Was but a grasp for greater things;
The things themselves were less than life
That deeper feels and truer rings.

The woman's vision wider made,
Her knowledge deeper felt and wrought,
May be the mighty force arrayed
For purer things the world has sought.

Her heart the crucible and mould,
Her mind the thought and destiny
Of generations still untold,
Of civ'lizations yet to be!

So ev'ry struggle makes for ends
The present cannot wholly see;
The hidden future still depends
On issues though they trivial be.

No protest and no movement vain,
So history must testify;
But always all of human gain
Has come by those we crucify.

But still you grieved because you saw
The bearers of the race arrayed
In violence, beyond the law,
In passions which no love allayed.

VIII. The Vision of Final Salvation

And as we turned our eyes away
From earthly things, and looked above,
The vision of their better day,
It lingered on your lips like love.

I thought I heard you say to me,
O'er din below, in peace above,
"All that they seek, it cannot be,
Except they learn the law of love;

"Oh, God, have mercy on each soul,
In flesh diseased, in body bent;
Oh, make them well, and make them whole,
From hate relieved, in love redempt.

"The love of God, the love of man,
The love of law, the love of all;
No might has e'er, nor reason can
The better state of man recall.

"But love thy neighbor as thyself --
The end of strife, the end of law;
The finding God by losing self,
The vision which their Teacher saw."

And in that day of greedless good,
Of loving heart and helping hand,
I heard them say, in serving mood,
On teeming sea and fruitful land:

“I have enough; has he enough?
I will not heap in bin, nor vault,
Nor storage house, the earthly stuff,
Of heaven sent, without default.

“Not for myself, nor yet my brood,
But for humanity and God;
For all the universal good,
Through love, and not beneath the rod.”

Enough for every one, for none
Too much—O dispensation new!
How clearer, brighter shines the sun,
When love the world has made anew!

How many years must intervene,
Oh, years of sorrow and of toil!
But may their summers still be green,
And fruitful be the kindly soil.

May mercies multiply on earth;
May justice sweeter seem to men,
And ever nearer draw the birth
That still remains beyond their ken.

Nor he the oracle who says,
Nor he the anarchist who pleads,
The law that takes from him who has,
The law that gives to him who needs.

IX. *The Vision of the Light of God*

And in the multitude of light,

There was the Light whose lamps are seven,
In distant nearness, shining bright
Upon the circuit of the heaven.

The Light was law, and life, and love,
The glory, and eternal right;
In worlds below, and heav'ns above,
It shone the self-creative might.

And all we saw, and all we heard,
The glory of the God declared;
Unseen His face, unheard His word,
In nature were His ways prepared.

A million worlds, they sang in chorus;
The stars, in orbits trembling, felt
The potent power shone before us;
In prayer the whole creation knelt.

Invisible, inviolate,
Omniscient, omnipotent,
Maker of worlds, and voice of fate,
His face our heaven's firmament!

A spirit and a mystery,
Indwelling, yet apart from all —
No semblance of the mind can be
Like God, or can His like recall.

X. The Vision of the Blessed Ones

We saw the dead of ages gone;
The hallowed mothers of the race,
Their faces lovely as the dawn;
And Blessed Mary, face to face!

And troops, we saw, of little girls,
The dews of earth still on their feet,
And on their brows their earthly curls,
Forever young, forever sweet!

Now glad in heaven's motherhood,
Love-cradled in a newer birth,
Some played, some in remembrance stood,
Their tender hands still stretched to earth.

How sweet and low their voices seemed,
On earth strange music it would be,
Not music played, but only dreamed;
Some came from where we could not see.

We saw a bank of clouds, O, soft!
With tint of rose on lilies laid;
And as we looked, we saw aloft
Their bevied host in light and shade.

In ev'ry atom beamed a face,
And ev'ry face was heavenly fair,
And ev'ry form endowed with grace,
While murmured music filled the air.

I felt your hand in mine; it thrilled
With joy divine, and in your face
I saw the greater love that filled
The multitudinary space.

We saw all those had wept, or prayed,
And those had lived sad-faced on earth;
But now in happiness arrayed
Because of some immortal birth.

The doers of the deeds were there,
The heroes, sages, prophet-host;
But most divine, and most were fair
The mothers who had suffered most.

And ev'ry noble deed was done
On earth, or tender mercy shown,
In love, by daughter or by son,
Fair in a mother's face it shone.

And many more, whole multitudes,
We saw, like fleecy clouds by day;
And all in joyful attitudes,
And singing in the heavenly way.

They shone diaphanous, like light,
Their garments, like their inmost thought,
In varied variations, white,
According to the minds that wrought.

Their mercies and their holy lives
Like pearls and jewels shone on them;
As light that with a brighter strives
So shone the dawn around each hem.

And they of all were fairest gowned
Whose deeds and mercies had been best,
Who sweetest peace on earth had found;
Who most had loved, they most were blest.

All adoration was their mien,
But more adored by those who came,
Entranced by all that they had seen,
Exceeding far all earthly fame.

O love adored, and hope fulfilled
In worship of sweet motherhood!
And ev'ry haunting fear was stilled —
I saw her, too, O ever good!

And then, all things how bright they were!
The world was wrapped in gentleness,
So infinite the love of her,
So intimate the loveliness!

I spoke to her, she spoke to me,
But what was said, I do not know;
I could not think, I could but see,
And feel celestial raptures glow.

XI. *The Vision of the Heavenly Help*

The faces and the words of friends
Sometimes came back in sweet surprise,
In all the charm that distance lends ;
I saw the gladness in your eyes.

Sometimes we heard their prayers and cries ;
We saw each sacrifice anew,
The offerings they brought with sighs ;
Our garments took a purer hue.

And looking back, we saw how we
Had marred and warped the weft of life
By things were not, and not to be,
By inward fears and outward strife.

And what on earth had seemed was life,
Now seemed was death, where in a night
Men grope awhile, 'mid toil and strife,
To reach at last our perfect light.

And dying was no loss, but gain,
Like some unconscious passing on,
That held no fear, and knew no pain,
Through curtains o'er our slumbers drawn.

And all these things we heard and saw,
In depth of feeling, yet unmoved,
Because we knew the greater law,
Far from the petty cares removed.

How often did we lean upon
The rose-twined walls of marbled air,
And talked of days that were long gone,
And of the friends left over there,

And roses plucked and dropped on them,
So far away that we could see
Naught but the essence of their souls,
Which shone, each in its entity.

And ev'ry rose was like a thought
That dropped from heaven on their sighs;
Unseen it fell, unconscious, wrought —
We saw them smile, and lift their eyes.

They felt some thought of them in heaven,
Some thought that came as comes the sun;
We knew some thought to us was given,
That cleansed what we had left undone.

But what we knew, they merely felt;
We wrought for them, they wrought for us,
And heaven smiled while earth was knelt,
Their faith it was bound them to us.

So earth and heaven still were one;
Men did their work, and men were glad,
And victories on earth were won
By silent contacts with their dead.

XII. The Vision of the Heavenly State

We thought that it was heaven blest,
Our endless journey to a star;
A little ways, a little rest,
No end to ever, ever far.

Our heaven was a newer earth,
Not made of matter, but of mind;
All things, by everlasting birth,
Had come in newer, better kind.

No battled armaments there stood
Upon the ramparts of our heaven;
No evil seemed, where all was good,
Where love was law, and light was leaven.

And there was no more sorrow there,
Nor was there heat, nor any cold;
And thirst and hunger had no share,
Nor weariness, and nothing old.

And naught we saw, and naught we heard,
Of death, or pain, or suffering;
In all eternity, no word
For such a state, or such a thing.

There was no prejudice, no fear,
No superstition and no hate;
All things were rational and clear,
And man was mind, not chance, nor fate.

No longings were unsatisfied,
No hopes deferred, no wants unfilled;
All love, all feeling gratified,
In joy divine each passion stilled.

It seemed that we were bodied in
Some spirit, fine, celestial,
With all the ages kith and kin,
But feelings still terrestrial.

Anticipation everlasting,
Always the rosy rising sun;
Always the song that you would sing,
And never quest, nor journey done.

Still ever deeper grew the feeling,
Still ever sweeter grew the song,
The depths of all your love revealing;
And clearer came the heavenly throng.

Still eastward, upward, oh, forever,
To distant star, beneath the moon,
With never any stress of weather,
Oh, always morning, never noon!

XIII. *The Vision of Her*

Alone I dreamed, in passing night —
And then you came and brought the day;
You were the vision and the light,
The upward and the onward way.

And then I knew the dreamy lane,
In which I saw two lovers stroll,
Stretched just betwixt your window pane
And me, my love beyond control.

But while I sat and dreamed of you,
'Twas heaven opened all her doors;
My lips they tasted heaven's dew,
My feet they walked celestial floors.

I heard the music you had heard,
The whole creation sang for me;
And sweet and precious was the word
That spoke the love that is to be.

The fabric vanished that was dreamed,
Its spirit reappeared in you;
You were the truth of what had seemed;
All else was gone, but you were true.

O ev'ry gift to man is given,
The sun by day, the stars by night,
The truth of earth, the dream of heaven,
I see in you, O blessed light!

Good Night

A Dedication to Her Mother

*O gentle mother of
A gentle child,
Who sees her life in love
New lived again!*

*O giver of the gift
Of heaven born,
To whom I owe new thrift
Of happy smiles!*

*'Tis summer gives the rose,
And lily fair;
Thy gift is more than those,
And sweeter far.*

*The loveliness I knew
Was always thine,
In her was born anew,
Made superfine.*

I'm Now About to Print

I'm now about to print
This little book of you;
I think so many things,
I know not what to do.

To crowd them into lines,
I've tried, and tried again;
The things I think of you,
To get them down and in!

Oh, all that I can print,
Is but a tiny part
Of what I'd like to say
To your elusive heart!

It's not the millionth part,
Nor yet the best of you;
It is the best of me,
The best that I can do.

How They Were Written

What gift of verse was mine,
Was but my love for you ;
My thoughts all ran to rhyme,
Whene'er I thought of you.

Of all I wrote for you,
No line a labor seemed ;
It came as flowers do,
As things that are but dreamed.

I did not seek the thought,
Nor struggled for the word ;
The thoughts they came unsought,
The words they came unheard.

And ev'ry chord I smote,
Was chord that bound my heart
To you ; howe'er remote,
We never seemed apart.

Oh, you will know some day,
How strange a thing is love ;
In what mysterious way,
It comes from some above.

And mine the humbler part,
These lines are yours, my dear ;
You wrote them in my heart,
And then I wrote them here.

In Seven Parts

In seven parts I made this book,
One for each year, and one for you ;
Since seven wears the mystic look,
What else was there that I could do ?

And multiply it as you may,
You'll find it an important year ;
Each one a station on your way,
Each one some joy will bring more dear.

There's fourteen years, and twenty-one,
And twenty-eight, and thirty-five —
By then, how much you will have done !
By forty-two, how then you'll thrive !

At forty-nine, I see you pause,
And hesitate to step across ;
For all your fears there is no cause,
Your years are gain, and never loss.

At seven times eleven years,
For you, your heart will still be young ;
For me, no more not even tears ;
But I will hear your praises sung !

For I will walk the lover's lane,
The one I've seen in dreams of you ;
And free from care, and free from pain,
Some roses I will drop to you.

Now, Take My Birthday Gift

I did not think to write a book,
But just a little birthday cheer;
But as I wrote, some word, or look,
Like Alice grew, too big, I fear.

The more I wrote, the more you grew;
The more you grew, the more I wrote;
And, oh, the more I thought of you,
So heaven seemed the less remote.

I thought your eyes were from the sky,
Your hair was woven from the sun,
Your hands were pink-white buds that sigh
Upon the rose when day is done.

I thought if I could have my way,
Could write the half I think you are,
These verses would outlive my day,
That some would read these lines afar;

I dreamed that birds would sing your name,
And flowers, as you passed along,
Would add their breath to your sweet fame;
That stars would stop to hear your song!

However poorly it is done,
The joy of doing it was mine;
Love ends what was in love begun,
The joy of taking it be thine.

At Last, Good-Bye

The sun is setting in the west,
The darkness falls on field and town;
Now comes the holy time of rest,
And I must say good-bye to you.

Dear one, so hard it is to do,
So hard to say good-bye and go;
I still would linger here with you,
I still would dream, and dreaming, write.

You cannot grow so big, nor old,
You cannot go so far away,
But I will tell, as here I've told,
The story of my love for you.

The world is beautiful to see,
Its beauty grows with passing years;
As you have made it so for me,
So may this wish of mine help you:

Sweet be your sleep, like song of praise,
And sweeter still your rising morn;
May all your days be happy days,
And all your nights be nights of peace!

O, many more your days and years,
And beautiful your words and deeds!
O, sweet your smiles, and few your tears,
And you yourself, the sweetest song!

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